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THE LIEDER OF PAUL DESSAU

By

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ABSTRACT

The composer Paul Dessau (1894-1979) was arguably one of the most significant composers of the Deutsche Demokratische Republik (German Democratic Republic, hereafter referred to as the GDR), yet a large portion of his music remains unperformed and unknown. This treatise will examine Paul Dessau's lieder and will provide a reference guide for musicians interested not only in Dessau's music, but also the evolution of German lieder through the mid-twentieth century. This treatise will survey examples of Dessau's lieder with the intent of exploring his compositional style, aesthetic, political philosophy, and his approach to varying song styles and poets. Special attention will be directed to placing Dessau's output within its historical, political, and cultural context.

“Music history is always political music history, whether one wants it to be or not.”¹

CHAPTER 1 BIOGRAPHY

The life and music of Paul Dessau illustrate the profound intersection of music and politics in the twentieth century. The majority of Dessau’s music is ultimately political, whether it be in response to World War I, the Holocaust, his exile, his embrace of Marxist ideologies, clashes with the East German censors, or his reception history abroad. The roots for both Dessau’s musical background and his political activism lie in his Jewish heritage.

Paul Dessau was born 19 December 1894 in Hamburg.² His musical heritage can be traced to his grandfather, Moses B. Dessau, a famous cantor in that city. Paul Dessau’s father, Sally Dessau (1849-1923), also had aspirations for a musical career. Instead he opted for financial stability, supporting his family as a tobacconist. His artistic appetite was sated with several posts as a cantor and frequent music making in the home.³ Dessau’s childhood memories of his father include household performances of lieder, as well as spirited musical discussions. Sally Dessau heartily encouraged his son to pursue the musical career he had abandoned.⁴

Paul Dessau’s earliest musical training was on a violin given to him by his uncle. He began his studies at six years of age and made rapid progress. Moving to Berlin, he studied violin at the Klindworth-Schwarwenka Conservatory with Florian Zajic from 1910-1912.⁵ It was Zajic, believing Dessau’s hands were not nimble enough for a successful career as a virtuoso violinist, who advised him to seek an alternative musical course. A child prodigy, frequently in the spotlight, he naturally aspired to a similar,

¹ Fred K. Prieberg, *Musik im anderen Deutschland*, (Köln: Verlag Wissenschaft und Politik, 1968), 9. “Musikgeschichte ist immer politische Musikgeschichte, ob man will oder nicht.” Quoted in Joy Haslam Calico, “The Politics of Opera in the German Democratic Republic, 1945-1961 (Bertolt Brecht, Paul Dessau, Hanns Eisler)” (Ph.D. diss., Duke University, 1991), 6.

² Fritz Hennenberg, “Dessau, Paul,” in *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, ed. S. Sadie and J. Tyrrell (London: Macmillan, 2001), 7: 247-48.

³ Sally Dessau to Paul Dessau, Hamburg, October 1919, in *Dokumente zu Leben und Werk*, ed. Daniela Reinold (Berlin: Stiftung Archiv der Akademie der Künste, Henschel Verlag, 1995), 18-20.

⁴ Fritz Hennenberg *Paul Dessau: Eine Biographie* (Leipzig: Deutscher Verlag für Musik, 1965), 9.

⁵ Paul Dessau, *Paul Dessau: aus Gesprächen erschienen anlässlich des 80. Geburtstages von Paul Dessau* (Leipzig: Deutscher Verlag für Musik, 1974), 239.

highly visible vocation. Following Zajic's guidance, Dessau chose to pursue a career as a conductor.

At the conservatory Dessau undertook piano and score studies with Eduard Behm,⁶ who strongly influenced Dessau's earliest compositional attempts, which were ventured at age fourteen (1908).⁷ Later he continued composing under the supervision of Max Loewengard. An unsuccessful composer, Loewengard was nevertheless an astute critic and theorist who authored several texts on harmony, counterpoint, and musical analysis. He provided Dessau with a sound foundation and technique, but not more.⁸

As with many young composers, Dessau's student compositions prominently feature lieder. He wrote *Vier Lieder*, Op. 2, in 1912. These four songs use poetry by Theodore Storm (1817-1888), Otto Ernst (1862-1926), and Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (1749-1832). Also included among Dessau's early works is a setting of Hermann Hesse's poem entitled "Inspiration." Composed in 1912, this work is scored for soprano, children's choir, orchestra, and organ.⁹ These student works rely heavily on the Romantic style and harmonic language of the previous century. In these early works, harmonic progression has precedence over melodic substance. For these reasons Dessau's biographer, Fritz Hennenberg, dismisses these student works for their Romantic clichés and argues that the songs fall into the style of salon music.

Dessau's passion for the theater and vocal music can be traced back to his student years. The opera fragment, *Giuditta*, sketched between 1910 and 1912, foreshadows Dessau's interest in composing for the stage. As a student he was a regular guest of the standing gallery at the Hamburg Stadttheater. According to Hennenberg, he was less interested in the actors than the conductors, including Gustav Brecher (1879-1940), Josef Stransky (1872-1936), Otto Klemperer (1885-1973). He idolized these musicians and was drawn to the theater by them night after night.¹⁰

Dessau graduated from the Klindworth-Schwarwenka Conservatory in 1912 and was immediately engaged as *Korrepetitor* (vocal coach) at the Hamburg Stadttheater.

⁶ Hennenberg, *Paul Dessau: Eine Biographie*, 10. According to Hennenberg, Behm had been a pupil of Johannes Brahms.

⁷ Dessau, *Paul Dessau: aus Gesprächen*, 239.

⁸ Hennenberg, *Paul Dessau: Eine Biographie*, 10.

⁹ Dessau, *Paul Dessau: aus Gesprächen*, 239.

¹⁰ Hennenberg, *Paul Dessau: Eine Biographie*, 9.

This post allowed Dessau to observe great singers such as Enrico Caruso (1872-1921), and conductors such as Felix Weingartner (1863-1942) and Arthur Nikisch (1855-1922). Dessau acknowledged that he learned more from this experience than from the years he had spent at the conservatory. In 1913, as Dessau's musical career rapidly gained momentum, the Tivoli Theater in Bremen engaged him to conduct performances of operettas.

As he continued to develop as a musician, Dessau felt not only the urge to interpret music, but a stronger desire to compose. The *Vier Lieder*, Op. 4, of 1914, on texts by Heinrich Bredow, were composed at the conclusion of Dessau's academic studies. These songs, dedicated to Loewengard, testify to Dessau's respectable, though youthful, technical skills. In this opus one senses the young composer testing his footing and searching for a voice beyond the traditional. Dessau's first success as a composer came with his *Klaviersonate* (piano sonata), which was premiered in Berlin in 1915 by Bruno Eisner (1884-1978). This work, heavily influenced by the music of Brahms and the instruction of Behm, is the central piece of Dessau's first creative period. Other lieder from this period include the following: "Verkündigun," (Proclamation), "Helle Nacht" (Clear Night), "Schlummerlied eines Landsturmmannes" (Slumber song of the Militia Man), and "Betrachtung" (Reflection).

The eruption of the First World War temporarily halted Dessau's career, but the horrors of war planted political seeds in his mind, seeds that would germinate later in his life. It was then that he adopted the belief that war was a crime, and he sought culprits. For many Germans, including Dessau, capitalism became a popular source of blame.¹¹ According to Dessau: "The First World War naturally changed me, but it did not make me a Marxist."¹² It took the events of the next fifteen years to finalize Dessau's conversion to Communism.

In the postwar era, there was a growing tendency for politically active Jews to join the Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands/SPD (Social Democratic Party of Germany) and the Unabhängige Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands/USPD (Independent Social Democratic Party of Germany). Jews served prominent leadership roles in these groups, as well as in the more radical Kommunistische Partei

¹¹ Ibid., 10-11.

¹² Dessau, *Paul Dessau: aus Gesprächen*, 19.

Deutschlands/KPD (Communist Party of Germany). Peter Pulzer hypothesizes that reasons for this Jewish interest in socialism and communism include “continuing migration into metropolitan areas, the move from self employment to wage earning, generational changes, and the appeal of idealism and utopianism to a marginalized and insecure minority.”¹³

The Jewish involvement in socialism and communism in the Weimar Republic can thus be viewed as an escape route from discrimination during the turbulent economic times before the currency stabilization of 1924, as well as later during the Great Depression. Though Dessau did not fully embrace communism during this time, the effects of this exposure are noteworthy. Naturally, his friends and colleagues exerted a significant influence with their debates, political activities, and agit-propaganda music.¹⁴

During the cultural explosion in the Weimar Republic, Dessau was too busy with conducting engagements in Hamburg, Köln, and Mainz, as well as composition, to be concerned with dedicated political party membership. During the 1920s, Dessau’s musical career quickly resumed with various posts. In Hamburg he was hired at the Kammerspiele as a conductor and resident composer in 1918. It was here that he composed his first theater music, *Lancelot und Sanderein*.¹⁵ Dessau remained at the Hamburg Kammerspiele only a short period of time. Otto Klemperer courted Dessau in 1919, convincing him to leave Hamburg and to take up residence in Köln.¹⁶ Here he served as Kappelmeister from 1919-1923. In 1924 he worked for a year as Kappelmeister in Mainz.¹⁷ After this he worked for a period as a freelance musician: orchestrating, playing violin for silent film orchestras, and composing.¹⁸

Dessau’s next significant musical post was in Berlin, where Bruno Walter hired him at the Städtische Oper as Kapellmeister in 1925. He debuted conducting *Rigoletto*, with Josef Schwarz in the title role, Maria Ivongün singing Gilda, and Fritz Kraus, the

¹³ Peter G. J. Pulzer, *Jews and the German State: The Political History of a Minority, 1848-1933* (Cambridge, MA: Blackwell Publishers, 1992), 270.

¹⁴ Agit-propaganda is the contraction of agitative propaganda. Agitprop was created for the purpose of encouraging political agitation through the use of propaganda. For additional information on communist music in the Weimar Republic see Margaret Jackson, “Workers, Unite! The Political Songs of Hanns Eisler, 1926-1932” (DM treatise, Florida State University, 2003)

¹⁵ Erich Engel directed the project. Interestingly enough they would work together again thirty years later on *Mutter Courage und ihre Kinder*.

¹⁶ Fritz Hennenberg, *Paul Dessau: Eine Biographie*, 17

¹⁷ Dessau, *Paul Dessau: aus Gesprächen*, 239.

¹⁸ Hennenberg, *Paul Dessau: Eine Biographie*, 17

Duke of Mantua. This year also brought with it a marked shift in occupational interest from conducting to composing.

With the growing popularity of film, there arose an increasing need for film composers. During the 1920s composers provided both original scores for silent movies as well as “pastiche” scores drawn from musical “cue sheets.”¹⁹ Composers with a gift for dramatic acumen were sought. Dessau used this increasing need for film composers to his advantage. He served as musical director in a movie theater owned by his uncle, acting as a compiler of cue sheet scores and as resident composer. He created several through-composed scores for short documentaries and animated films.²⁰ Dessau used this opportunity not solely as a means for financial gain, but as a way to experiment with his musical language while remaining gainfully employed.²¹

Dessau’s musical language in his film scores, instrumental music, and vocal music during the 1920s was strongly influenced by the artistic movement *Neue Sachlichkeit* (New Objectivity). The influence of *Neue Sachlichkeit*, a reaction against expressionism, can be found in literature, painting, architecture, and music. Dessau’s compositions during this era display a strong emphasis on musical form, design, and counterpoint. His *Bratschen Sonatine* (Viola Sonatina) borrowed themes from Hindemith and drew heavily on elements of Baroque music. The string quartet fragment of 1927 and the String Quartet No. 1 utilize the Baroque compositional devices of passacaglia and fugue. Hennenberg compares Dessau’s work from this period with Bauhaus architectural style.²²

Economic problems intensified political struggles in the Weimar Republic as the end of the 1920s approached. The effects of the New York stock market crash and the ensuing Great Depression were immediately felt in the Weimar Republic. Concerning the Great Depression Dietrich Orlow writes:

Economic historians continue to debate the long- and short-range causes of the Great Depression, but there is little disagreement about its devastating impact.

¹⁹ For additional information on silent film scoring see Gillian Anderson, “Presentation of Silent Films, or Music and Anesthesia,” *Journal of the American Musicological Society*, Vol. V/2 (1987): 269; Rick Altman, “The Silence of the Silents,” *Musical Quarterly*, vol. 80, no. 4 (1996): 680; and Michael Hix, “The Lee Erwin Collection: The Music of Silent Film Composer and Theater Organist Lee Erwin” (M.M. thesis, Florida State University, 2003)

²⁰ Dessau, *Paul Dessau: aus Gesprächen*, 126-127.

²¹ Hennenberg, *Paul Dessau: Eine Biographie*, 19

²² *Ibid.*, 25

The seeming suddenness of the downturn, its rapid spread, its depth and duration created a political and social crisis from which no Western society was immune, but which reached disastrous dimensions in Germany.²³

It was during this time that Dessau began to compose his earliest politically oriented music. The first two songs of this type, written in 1930-1931, are “Die Räuberballade vom Pierre, dem roten Coquillard” (The Robber Ballad of Pierre, the Red Bandit) and “Kaffeeholder ‘raus; ein ernstes Soldatenlied” (Coffee Carrier; a Serious Soldier Song).²⁴

The increased economic hardships during this period caused dire political upheaval in Germany. The Depression transformed the National Socialist party (Nazis) from a fringe group to a major political force. Because the Nazis were in no way involved in any of the economic or political difficulties encountered by Germany after 1919, they held a great advantage over rival parties. They could place all blame on other political factions: SPD, USPD, and KPD. “They could attack without having to defend themselves with a single word.”²⁵ Hitler’s appointment as chancellor in 1933 began a rule of terror that forced thousands (both Jews and communists) into exile. This included such artists as Arnold Schoenberg (1874-1951), Kurt Weill (1900-1950), Hanns Eisler (1898-1962), Erich Korngold (1897-1957), Bertolt Brecht (1898-1956), and Paul Dessau. This exile, like the experiences of World War I, deepened Dessau’s interest in communism. He believed that the root causes of fascism were economic and that modern barbarity was caused by exploitation of the workers by the elite.²⁶

The reaction of the aforementioned artists to the rule of the Nazi party and the Holocaust is a fascinating facet of the darkest part of the twentieth century’s history. In 1933 Arnold Schoenberg, who had converted to Protestantism in 1898, symbolically protested the anti-Semitic policies of the Nazis by returning to his Jewish roots. Since the early 1920s, Schoenberg had contemplated this conversion, but the rise of the Nazis motivated him to finally take this step. Schoenberg’s artistic statement of his Jewish heritage manifested itself in the Op. 39 *Kol nidre* (1939). This music is based on the

²³ Dietrich Orlow, *A History of Modern Germany: 1871 to Present* (Englewood, NJ: Prentice Hall 1991), 181.

²⁴ Hennenberg, *Paul Dessau: Eine Biographie*, 31.

²⁵ Golo Mann, *The History of Germany Since 1789*, trans. Marian Jackson (New York: Praeger, 1968), 642.

²⁶ Hennenberg, *Paul Dessau: Eine Biographie*, 32.

form and texts of a Hebrew prayer service Kurt Weill reacted similarly with his musicals, *The Eternal Road* (1935-1936) and *We Will Never Die* (1943), both of which dealt specifically with the oppression of the Jews. Both musicals wedded popular theater song style with Jewish folk music.²⁷

As Hitler took control in Germany, many Jews fled the country. Dessau's first destination in his flight from the Nazis was Paris. In 1933, his first year in exile, he composed two symphonic works: an orchestral suite that was later revised as his *Second Symphony*, and a suite of film music entitled *AWODAH*.²⁸ The suffering of the Jews under the Nazis in Germany was naturally an important theme for Dessau. This is seen in the numerous songs and Psalm settings that utilized Jewish themes and folk music. Dessau also explored his Jewish heritage in the *Haggada*. A collaboration with Max Brod, *Haggada* is a scenic oratorio that combines Jewish poetic form and music inspired by Jewish folk music.²⁹ Composed in 1936, it is Dessau's most significant work in Hebrew.

In 1935 Dessau began to study twelve-tone music with René Leibowitz, a French composer, music theorist, teacher, and conductor, who claimed to be a pupil of Anton Webern.³⁰ According to Hennenberg, Dessau's dissonant twelve tone music reflects the turbulent world of the 1930s. He writes that Dessau's music during this time, including the *Zwölf-ton-Versuche: Fünf Studien für Klavier* (Twelve-tone Attempts: Five Studies for Piano) and *Klavierstück Guernica* (Piano Piece Guernica), was music of critical realism that depicted modern barbarity that held no optimism.³¹

During his exile in Paris, Dessau also began work on the orchestrated song *Les voix* (The Voices), based on poetry by Paul Verlaine (1844-1896). This lengthy work for soprano and orchestra utilizes twelve-tone technique. Composed in 1936, Dessau's

²⁷ Jürgen Schebera, *Kurt Weill: An Illustrated Life*, trans. Caroline Murphy (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995), 253-305.

²⁸ Hennenberg, *Paul Dessau: Eine Biographie*, 33-34.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, 34. (It is important to note that Dessau also used Jewish folk music as thematic material for his first symphony. This symphony, written in 1926 and revised in 1929, was referred to as an exotic work by critics. Discussion of this symphony can be found in Paul Dessau, *Paul Dessau: aus Gesprächen*. (Leipzig: Deutscher Verlag für Musik, 1974), 58.

³⁰ Sabine Meine, "Leibowitz, René," in *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, ed. S. Sadie and J. Tyrrell (London: Macmillan, 2001), 14: 501-502. Leibowitz claimed to have been a student of Schoenberg and Webern, though this fact is unsubstantiated. Sabine Meine speculates the following: "it appears that his knowledge of their music was acquired primarily through intensive study of their scores..."

³¹ Hennenberg, *Paul Dessau: Eine Biographie*, 41-42

setting of Bertolt Brecht's text "Kampflied der schwarzen Strohhüte" ("Fighting Song of the Black Straw Hats") foreshadowed Dessau's relationship with his most significant collaborator.

Dessau's evolution from a young German Jew curious about the tenets of socialism to a Communist party member reached its conclusion during his exile in Paris. Fascism at home and the Spanish Civil War (1936-1939) inspired Dessau politically and musically. In her book *The Last Revolutionaries*, Catherine Epstein writes:

For Leftists, the Spanish Civil War became the most important theater of the anti-fascist struggle; the effort to preserve the Spanish Republic was billed as a heroic battle of justice against oppression. Tens of thousands of foreign volunteers rushed to Spain to join the International Brigade. The IB included more than 5,000 Germans, some sixty to seventy percent of whom were KPD members.³²

Dessau responded to this conflict by joining the Communist Party as well as composing numerous fighting songs or *Kampflieder*. The most famous of these songs, "Die Thälmannkolonne" (The Thälmann Convoy), became a popular agit-prop song for Communists worldwide.³³

When the United Kingdom and France declared war on Germany in 1939, many Germans in exile in France decided to avoid the spreading conflict by fleeing to America. In 1939 Dessau departed France and immigrated to the United States. For many of the artists "driven into paradise,"³⁴ acculturation was difficult. In "Hollywood Elegie IV" Bertolt Brecht paints a vivid picture of his temporary home.

Diese Stadt hat mich belehrt
Paradies und Hölle können eine Stadt sein.
Für die Mittellosen
Ist das Paradies die Hölle.

This city has made me realize
Paradise and Hell can be the same city.
For the unsuccessful

³² Catherine Epstein, *The Last Revolutionaries: German Communists and Their Century* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2003), 63. It is interesting to note that many of the German Communists who fought with the IB or who otherwise supported the IB in the Spanish Civil War later become prominent political figures in East Germany.

³³ Dessau, *Paul Dessau: aus Gesprächen*, 18.

³⁴ Arnold Schoenberg, *Style and Idea: Selected Writings*, ed. Leonard Stein, trans. Leo Black (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1984), 501-502. The passage above refers to Schoenberg's flight to America.

The Paradise is Hell.³⁵

Life in the United States was also difficult for Dessau. He worked numerous jobs earning a meager living. He taught music in a New York orphanage, as well as for the Young Men's Hebrew Association in New York City from 1942-1943. He worked in several synagogues as a singer and composer, continuing his work of setting Hebrew texts and folk songs.

Despite financial difficulties in New York, Dessau enjoyed the good fortune of having several of his works performed. His *Psalm No. 3* was featured at the Museum of Modern Art in a concert sponsored by the League of Composers in 1940.³⁶ *Les voix* was performed on a concert of the International Society for Contemporary Music in 1941.³⁷

Undoubtedly, the most positive aspect of his time in exile was his collaborative relationship with the German playwright and poet Bertolt Brecht. Georg Alexan, the secretary for the "Tribüne für freie Deutsche Literatur und Kunst in Amerika" (The Platform for Free German Literature and Art in America), introduced Dessau to Brecht in 1942.³⁸ Dessau wrote: "Working with Brecht was one of my great dreams. When I first encountered Weill's *Lindberghflug* [Lindbergh's Flight] and the *Jasager* [The Yes-Man] and other things in Berlin at the end of the 20s, not to mention the *Dreigroschenoper* [Three Penny Opera], I was fascinated."³⁹

At Alexan's suggestion, Dessau played his setting of "Kampflied der schwarzen Strohhüte" for Brecht. Pleased by the song, Brecht immediately included it on a musical program (a "Brecht-Abend") at the Studio Theater of the New School for Social Research

³⁵ Bertolt Brecht, *Gedichte*, ed. E. Hauptman and B. Slupianak (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1976), vol. 6/58. English translation by the author.

³⁶ Dessau, *Dokumente zu Leben und Werk*, 63. This concert highlighting the works of European Composers who had immigrated to the United States also included music by Lopatnikoff, Rathaus, Wolpe, and Zemlinsky.

³⁷ Ibid., 58. The program for the concert is included in the Paul Dessau Archiv.

³⁸ Thomas Nadar, "The Music of Kurt Weill, Hanns Eisler, and Paul Dessau in the Dramatic Works of Bertolt Brecht" (Ph.D. diss., University of Michigan, 1974), 44-50. Various sources state differing facts on this account. In 1938 Dessau composed the music for a performance of Brecht's *99%* (later titled *Furcht und Elend im dritten Reich*) in Paris. Brecht was present during the rehearsal period, but according to Nadar "made no comment to Dessau on the music."

³⁹ Dessau, *Paul Dessau: aus Gesprächen*, 63. "Mit Brecht zusammenzuarbeiten war für mich ein Wunschtraum. Als ich in Berlin Ende der zwanziger Jahre den "Lindberghflug" und den "Jasager" von Weill kennenlernte und andere Dinge, von der "Dreigroschenoper" gar nicht zu reden, war ich fasziniert." Translated by Margaret Jackson.

in New York City.⁴⁰ After this performance Brecht offered Dessau the poem “Lied einer deutschen Mutter”(Song of A German Mother), along with some suggestions for the melody. These early experiences forged the way for future collaborations between Brecht and Dessau. Paul Dessau’s collaboration with Brecht lasted until Brecht’s death in 1956. These thirteen years represent a shorter association than the playwright enjoyed with Eisler or Weill, yet Dessau composed music for more of Brecht’s own dramatic works and adaptations than did either of the others. Of this collaboration Nadar writes:

Brecht’s most experimental pieces (both musically and dramatically) were written with Weill, his most political dramas with Eisler, and his most mature dramas, which deal more realistically with human character, with Dessau.⁴¹

Dessau collaborated with Brecht on thirteen plays and the opera *Das Verhör des Lukullus/Die Verurteilung des Lukullus* (The Condemnation of Lukullus/The Trial of Lukullus). Inspired by his poetry, Dessau utilized Brecht’s verse in several choral works and forty-one lieder.

The influence of Brecht on Dessau cannot be overstated. Not only did Brecht act as a collaborator, but also as a philosophical and political influence. Ronald Speirs writes:

Brecht was convinced that Capitalism (or the Great Disorder, as it is called in *Me-ti*) was inherently a belligerent form of economic and social organisation based on internal class warfare between the exploiters and the exploited and on external aggression towards competitors for markets or for sources of raw material or cheap labor. . . . Brecht believed fascism was a symptom of Capitalism in crisis.⁴²

Brecht’s beliefs inspired Dessau’s Marxist outlook. Dessau was also indebted to Brecht for his introduction to the Marxist philosophy Dialectic Materialism.⁴³ In addition to these philosophical ideals, Dessau sought to musically adapt Brecht’s aesthetic concepts. Most significant is Dessau’s musical adaptation of *Verfremdungseffekt* (alienation effect) and *Gestus* (gesture) in his stage works.⁴⁴

⁴⁰ Nadar, “The Music of Kurt Weill, Hanns Eisler, and Paul Dessau in the Dramatic Works of Bertolt Brecht,” 50.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 6-7.

⁴² Ronald Speirs, ed. *Brecht’s Poetry of Political Exile* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 8.

⁴³ For a thorough discussion of Dialectic Materialism and musicians see Margaret Jackson, “Workers, Unite! The Political Songs of Hanns Eisler, 1926-1932.”

⁴⁴ Fritz Hennenberg, *Dessau-Brecht: Musicalische Arbeiten* (Berlin: Henschel Verlag, 1963), 204-252 and 265-270.

After their initial meeting, Brecht encouraged Dessau to move to California, which he did in 1944. Like many other musicians in exile, Dessau worked in the film industry. He composed and orchestrated film music for several Hollywood studios. During this time Kurt Weill and Hanns Eisler were composing music for Brecht's plays, so Brecht gave Dessau the opportunity to set poems from the collection *Deutsche Kriegsfibel* (German War Primer). The result was an oratorio consisting of thirty-five pieces for soloists, chorus, and orchestra. This large scale collaboration, *Das deutsche Miserere* (The German Miserere), occupied Dessau for three years.⁴⁵ In 1946 and 1947 Dessau composed incidental music for Brecht's plays *Mutter Courage und ihre Kinder* (Mother Courage and Her Children) and *Der gute Mensch von Sezuan* (The Good Man from Sezuan).⁴⁶

During his exile in the United States, Dessau continued to draw from various musical styles and vocabularies. This eclectic mix utilizes a musical language that includes dodecacophony, jazz and popular styles, and Jewish folk music. The most significant works during this exile in the United States are the aforementioned collaborations with Bertolt Brecht.

The end of WWII brought with it numerous problems. Germany's cities lay in ruins; poverty, hunger, and misery were widespread. To compound the situation, the beginnings of the Cold War destroyed the alliance between the United States and the Soviet Union. Germany, split between the Western Allies (United States, Great Britain, and France) and Russia, immediately became a significant stage on which the drama of the Cold War unfolded. The possibility of an early reunification of Germany ended in May of 1949 with the establishment of the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG). The People's Congress in the Soviet-occupied zone countered with the founding of the German Democratic Republic (GDR) in October of the same year.⁴⁷

Early on, the leading political party in the GDR, the SED (Sozialistische Einheitspartei Deutschlands/Socialist Unity Party of Germany), sought to recruit German intellectuals who were living abroad to return to the infant East Germany. With this recruitment they hoped to "lend a civilizing air of credibility and legitimacy to the new

⁴⁵ Nadar, 51.

⁴⁶ Hennenberg, "Dessau, Paul," in *The New Grove Dictionary*, 7: 247-48.

⁴⁷ Dietrich Orlow, *A History of Modern Germany*, 262-277.

state in the eyes of the international community.”⁴⁸ Despite the economic and social difficulties associated with rebuilding after war, the SED succeeded in bringing home many artists. Literary figures such as Anna Seghers (1900-1983), Erich Weinert (1890-1953), Friedrich Wolf (1888-1953), and Willi Bredel (1901-1964) all returned to make the GDR their home. Ernst Hermann Meyer (1905-1988), the musicologist and composer, returned from England in 1948. In this same year, Bertolt Brecht relocated to East Berlin from the United States. The musicologist Georg Knepler (1906-2003) was courted to return to East Germany in 1949. After a period in his native Austria, Hanns Eisler took up residence in East Berlin in 1950. Dessau returned to Germany in 1948, and settled in East Berlin in 1949.

The USSR and the SED realized the importance of culture in establishing a new communist nation. As early as 1948, composers were discussed the roles of musical culture and the composer in East Germany. At the Second International Congress of Composers in 1948, Hanns Eisler urged communist composers returning to Germany to direct attention to “musical forms that are most concrete in their contents, particularly operas, oratorios, cantatas, songs, mass choruses, etc.,” as well as to the education of the German people.⁴⁹

Upon his return, Dessau exploded with politically charged music for voice and chorus including “Aufbaulied der FDJ” (Construction Song of the FDJ), “Zukunftslied” (Future Song), *Zwei Grabschriften* (Two Epitaphs), and “Proletarier aller Länder, vereinigt euch!” (Proletariat of All Lands, Unite!), a setting of Marx and Engels. In addition, Dessau began work with Brecht and the Berliner Ensemble. His first compositions for this theater group include the music for *Die Ausnahme und die Regel* (The Exception and the Rule), and *Herr Puntila und seine Knecht Matti* (Mr. Puntila and his Man Matti).

The SED utilized many of the returning artists as founding members of its major cultural organizations. These two groups were the Deutsche Akademie der Künste (German Academy of the Arts), founded in 1950, and the Verband der Komponisten und

⁴⁸ Calico, “The Politics of Opera,” 40-41.

⁴⁹ “Declaration of the Second International Congress of Composers and Musicologists in Prague, 29 May 1948,” cited in Nicolas Slonimsky, *Music Since 1900* (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1971), 1378.

Musikwissenschaftler/VdK (Federation of Composers and Musicologists) in 1951.⁵⁰

With the formations of these two organizations, the Soviets could more effectively control cultural politics in East Germany. The use of artistic organizations to monitor the arts had proven effective in controlling intellectuals in the USSR. However, in East Germany several early problems arose between artistic camps. This system, according to Calico:

. . . did not take into account the fact that years of exile in the east and west meant that equally dedicated Marxists might have different ideas about the role of the arts in a socialist state. The Soviets and those members of the former KPD who spent the war in Moscow and were now leading members of the SED promoted the theory of socialist realism, while those intellectuals returning from exile in the west, particularly the United States, were opposed to it.⁵¹

Socialist realism is defined as an “artistic method whose basic principle is the truthful, historically concrete depiction of reality in its revolutionary development, and whose most important task is the communist education of the masses.”⁵² It is thus a complicated mixture of political propaganda and artistic principals. It is conservative in form and technique, yet cannot be considered naturalism. The aesthetic aim of socialist realism is to reflect the potential of humankind in a utopian communist society. It attempts to portray the future, not the present. Prominent traits of this artistic method include the realistic depiction of the class struggle in all its complexity, an optimistic belief in the triumph of communism, and an emphasis on the leading and organizing role of the party in the building of socialism. This cultural policy, which had been in effect in Russia since 1934, draws heavily on the historic traditions of the related country (be that Germany or the USSR). In the GDR, the music draws heavily from the traditions of the master composers of the Classic and Romantic eras. Any work of art that did not meet the approval of the proponents of socialist realism was dismissed as formalist. Both the terms formalist and socialist realism have ambiguous qualities and are difficult to define. The malleability of these ideas lent power to the controlling censors of the SED, with artists striving to create works that would meet with approval.

⁵⁰ Calico, “The Politics of Opera,” 42-43. Dessau was a founding member of the VdK.

⁵¹ Ibid., 45-46.

⁵² Claus Dieter Kernig, *Marxism, Communism, and Western Society; A Comparative Encyclopedia* (New York: Herder and Herder, 1972-1973), 8: 1-2.

Branding one with the label formalist became an effective way to control intellectuals. In music, the label formalist is synonymous with works that are construed as expressionistic and modernist. Socialist realists saw this modernism as decadent and the “last vestiges of a decaying bourgeois culture.”⁵³ According to the socialist leader Zhdanov, this is “music that is crude, vulgar, based on atonality, on dissonance from beginning to end, music in which consonance is made the exception and false notes and their combination the rule.”⁵⁴

In 1951 Brecht and Dessau incurred the wrath of the censors of the SED with their opera *Das Verhör des Lukullus*. In this work Dessau aspired to unify communist political thought and the musical techniques of the *avant-garde*. To protest war and fascism, Dessau composed sections of atonal music, harsh dissonances, and heavily percussive orchestration throughout *Das Verhör des Lukullus*. This opera, deemed formalist by the censors, was withdrawn in 1951 and revised before it had its premiere in 1952 as *Die Verurteilung des Lukullus*.⁵⁵

The Cold War was not only limited to politics. As the 1950s progressed, East Germany and West Germany were pitted against each other in a cultural Cold War. In West Germany the artistic freedom composers enjoyed manifested itself in the serialist music of the Darmstadt school. Karlheinz Stockhausen (b. 1928) and Pierre Boulez (b. 1925) created the famous *Ferienkurse* (holiday course) in 1957. In the opening of *Music and German National Identity* Celia Applegate writes:

West German musical avant-garde, postwar composers shunned any association, even a stylistic one with the music of Germany’s past that had, in their view, allowed itself to be exploited for overzealous nationalist aims. Severing all ties with music from German Romanticism on, they turned instead to the most symbolic victims of National Socialist musical propaganda, Arnold Schoenberg and his school. Yet this turn to the esoteric realms of serialism and electronic music was not solely a rejection of the past and flight into the realms of purely abstraction, but also an indication of the infiltration of Cold War ideology into musical politics.⁵⁶

⁵³ Ibid., 19-20.

⁵⁴ Andrei Zhdanov, *Essays on Literature, Philosophy, and Music* (New York, 1950), 81 in Joy Haslam Calico, “The Trial, the Condemnation, the Cover-up: Behind the Scenes of Brecht/Dessau’s *Lucullus Opera(s)*,” *Cambridge Opera Journal* 40/3 (2002): 315.

⁵⁵ Calico, “The Trial, the Condemnation, the Cover-up,” 325-337.

⁵⁶ Celia Applegate, *Music and German National Identity*, edited by C. Applegate and P.M. Potter (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002), 28.

In the GDR, musicians sought to define themselves in relief against the music of the United States and West Germany. Both groups were zealously unwavering as they became entrenched in a sort of cultural warfare. Capitalists and communists believed that unification would occur, and their political structure would be the ruling one. Composers in the FGR and the GDR both sought to compose the music of the new Germany.⁵⁷

After the death of Josef Stalin in 1953, Stalinist cultural policies came under attack. With the establishment of the GDR Ministry of Culture in 1954, the hopes for artistic freedom were high. At the Fourth Writers Conference in 1956, artists demanded a return to the artistic freedom and experimentation of the early Bolshevik years. The SED remained non-committal, but in 1959 issued a new artistic mandate, a modified version of socialist realism called the *Bitterfeldweg* (Bitterfeld Way). The *Bitterfeldweg* mandated a change in the focus of artists in East Germany. The new objective was to create *Unterhaltungsmusik* (entertainment music): works that were useful and easily accessible for the common citizen. This anti-intellectual movement encouraged composers to write songs, choral music, and popular music that could be used by workers' groups and in the schools. Large-scale works such as operas were discouraged and dismissed as bourgeois.⁵⁸ Similarly, disapproval of modernist musical vocabulary continued.

Regardless of party politics, Dessau continued undeterred to compose in whatever musical style he felt best served his political and artistic goals. His stature as a significant artist in the GDR allowed him to exist simultaneously as a dreaded rebel and a famed hero.⁵⁹ As a result of his dissonant compositional language, several other works, including *Hymne auf den Beginn einer neuen Geschichte der Menschheit* (Hymn on the Beginning of a New History of Mankind) from 1959 and *Appell der Arbeiterklasse* (Appeal of the Working Class) from 1961, were heavily criticized. Regardless of criticism, Dessau emerged as the musical father of the GDR. In 1953 he received the *Nationalpreis* (National Prize) of the GDR, which he won again in 1956, 1965, and 1974.

⁵⁷ According to Amy Beal, "Patronage and Reception History of American Music in West Germany 1945-1985" (Ph.D. diss., University of Michigan, 1999), the U.S. Government provided funds to the composers of the Darmstadt school. There is also speculation that the CIA was involved in aiding this cultural political warfare.

⁵⁸ Calico, "The Politics of Opera in the German Democratic Republic," 287.

⁵⁹ Dessau, *Dokumente zu Leben und Werk*, 82.

In 1952 Dessau became a member of the *Deutsche Akademie der Künste* in East Berlin. He served as its vice president from 1957-1962.

With the death of Bertolt Brecht on 14 August 1956, Dessau found himself without a collaborator. He sought new poets as well as new musical forms to communicate his ideals. After 1956 Dessau worked frequently with Karl Mickel, Volker Braun, Georg Maurer and Heiner Müller. Another significant collaborator was his wife, Ruth Berghaus Dessau.

After the debacle associated with *Das Verhör des Lukullus*, Dessau was hesitant to compose another opera. Nevertheless, he began work on a second one, *Puntila*, in 1957. Based on his previous collaboration with Brecht, *Herr Puntila und sein Knecht Matti*, the opera combined twelve-tone musical techniques with folk-influenced music.

With the building of the Berlin Wall in 1961, the SED attempted to stop the relocation of East German citizens to the West. Though the construction of the Berlin Wall was also an attempt to isolate the GDR from Western cultural influences, many works from the 1960s actually display the adoption of formalist musical techniques by composers. Dessau's music from the 1960s onward utilized atonality, serialism, and aleatoric procedures.

Dessau believed that composers must also function within society as educators, which prompted Dessau to accept several teaching posts. He served as a professor at the Akademie der Künste, as well as a teacher at a primary school in Zeuthen, a suburb of Berlin.⁶⁰ While teaching at this primary school, Dessau composed numerous works for children. These included *Tierversen* (Animal Songs), *Vier kleine Stücke* (Four Little Pieces), and *Klavierstücke* (Piano Pieces). Dessau also set texts by several of his young pupils in *Fünf kleine Lieder* (Five Small Songs), "Ein Fluss möchte ich sein" (I Want to Be a River), and "Klein Li möchte schlafen" (Little Li Wants to Sleep).

Dessau's home in the Berlin suburb of Zeuthen was the central meeting place for his circle of friends and pupils. Gatherings included respected writers such as Georg Maurer, and Anna Seghers, and imminent composers Heinz Werner Henze, Luigi Nono, Alfred Schnittke, Rudolph Wagner-Regney, and Albert Reimann. About Dessau, Henze wrote:

⁶⁰ Hennenberg, "Dessau, Paul," in *The New Grove Dictionary*, 7: 247-48.

No one has ever spoken to me of Mozart with more understanding and more love than Paul, and in everything that he said his aesthetic was revealed, which I liked a great deal, and which made me reflect for the first time on the role of the artist in society. For him the task of the composer consisted of and consists in a constant dialectical rapport with everyday life, in interrelationships, and in an altogether feverishly combative existence. . . . I grasped how he was deeply concerned to see and shape music as a living component of the world; as speech and reply; as an instrument of the class struggle, in which process he strove also to incorporate inherited means of expression that had been brought to the latest stage of their technical development.⁶¹

Starting in 1963 Dessau began work on his largest group of lieder. Between 1963 and 1967 he set twenty-seven poems of the poet Georg Maurer (1907-1971). This song cycle, entitled *Siebenundzwanzig Lieder aus dem Dreistrophenkalendar* (Twenty-seven Songs from the Three Stroph Calendar), features six different voice types (Coloratura Soprano, Lyric Soprano, Alto, Tenor, Baritone, and Bass) singing solo and duet works with piano accompaniment.

After an esteemed career as a leading composer of the GDR for over thirty years, Paul Dessau died in Berlin on 28 June 1979. The most important musical figure in the history of East Germany, Dessau spent the latter half of his life composing five operas (*Das Verhör des Lukullus/ Die Verurteilung des Lukullus*, *Puntila*, *Einstein*, *Leonce und Lena*, *Lanzelot*), numerous cantatas and choral music, a wealth of symphonic music, and 178 of his over 250 lieder.

⁶¹ Hans Werner Henze, *Music and Politics: Collected Writings, 1953-1981*. Trans. by Peter Labayani (London: Faber and Faber, 1982), 258.

CHAPTER 2 DISCUSSION OF PUBLICATIONS

Since its inception, *lieder* has held a fascinating position within the oeuvre of Germanic composers. For some composers, song composition was the cornerstone of their careers. For others it served as a small-scale musical form in which to experiment with musical language. Song also frequently assumes an autobiographical nature because of the composer's intimate and subtle reaction to a text. Regarding this, Eric Sams and Graham Johnson wrote:

Although music cannot in itself be autobiographical, it is a unique feature of song that a composer is susceptible, when selecting a text, to poetry that happens to chime with current moods, feelings or predicaments, in the manner of any ordinary reader – indeed, some sort of personal identification may well be needed in order to kindle a musical response.⁶²

Bruce Campbell offered the following opinion regarding the autobiographical nature of songs as it relates to political music:

A song, or a group of songs can be as revealing of one's identity as a resume or a manifesto of political beliefs, though the exact significance is almost always harder to pin down than a text of words alone"⁶³

This autobiographical quality is vividly exhibited in Paul Dessau's music. The songs, numbering over 250, form the core of his oeuvre. Hennenberg praised Dessau's song repertoire, stating, "where others merely gave expression to their personal sentiments Dessau captured the essence of history in the making."⁶⁴

Due to his close working relationship with Bertolt Brecht, and the cultural climate experienced by both artists, it is not surprising that communism is a highly visible theme

⁶² Eric Sams and Graham Johnson, "Lieder," in *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, ed. S. Sadie and J. Tyrrell (London: Macmillan, 2001), 14: 670.

⁶³ Bruce Campbell *Kein schöner Land: The Spielschar Ekkehard and the Struggle to Define German National Identity in the Weimar Republic*. In *Music and German National Identity*, edited by C. Applegate and P.M. Potter (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002), 128.

⁶⁴ Hennenberg, *Dessau-Brecht: Musicalisches Arbeiten*, 189-90.

in Dessau's catalog. In *Paul Dessau: aus Gesprächen erschienen anlässlich des 80. Geburtstages von Paul Dessau*, the composer commented on his dedication to Marxism:

A Communist is a man who looks around and asks: How can I live with my fellow man? What can I do to change my world? And there begins, I believe, Marxism.⁶⁵

Unfortunately, Western scholars have portrayed the GDR as “technically and culturally backward”⁶⁶ and denigrate the music of socialist composers as mere propaganda. This generalization has led to a dismissal of the majority of Dessau's music. In his book *Politics and Music*, the eminent composer Heinze Werner Henze wrote the following about Dessau's music:

I believe that many of these works are not yet sufficiently known internationally, and that their potential has not yet been realized; but this will come, this is music that belongs to the future, and whose humanistic seriousness and historical decisiveness will urgently be required.⁶⁷

This music of “humanistic seriousness” and “historical decisiveness” composed by a composer who sought to “change his world” merits a reevaluation. The purpose of the following discussion is to briefly examine a few of the varied songs in Dessau's oeuvre. This reevaluation seeks to provide new lieder which can be performed by students and professionals, as well as a body of work that displays the dynamic interplay of political history and music.

Dessau's primary collections of lieder exist in four publications. After returning to East Germany, Dessau compiled *Zwanzig Lieder* (Twenty Songs) in 1950. Published by Thüringer Volksverlag, it contains twenty political songs. This includes agit-propaganda/fighting songs such as “Die Thälmannkolonne” (The Thälmann Convoy), mass songs such as “Zukunftslied,” and “Aufbaulied der FDJ,” as well as politically oriented art songs such as “Lied einer deutschen Mutter” and three versions of “Kriegslied” (War Song). The poets represented in this collection include Karl Ernst, Günter Kunert, Sancho Perez, Bertolt Brecht, Matthias Claudius, Armin Müller, L. Fürnberg, Willi Layh, Erich Weinert, Heinz Busch, and Jaroslaw Iwaszkiewicz. The fact

⁶⁵ Dessau, *Paul Dessau: aus Gesprächen*, 18.

⁶⁶ Julia Hell, Loren Kruger, and Katie Trumpener, “Dossier: Socialist Realism and East German Modernism—Another Historian's Debate,” *Rethinking Marxism* 7, No. 3 (Fall 1994): 37-44.

⁶⁷ Henze, *Music and Politics*, 258.

that Dessau's first significant song collection contains exclusively political songs displays his commitment to use his music as a vehicle for political ideas.

In 1957 *Brecht/Dessau Lieder und Gesänge* was published. It contains fifty-five settings of Brecht's texts. It includes art songs, agit-propaganda songs, songs from stage works such as *Der kaukasische Kreidekreis* (The Caucasian Chalk Circle) and *Der gute Mensch von Sezuan*, excerpts from the cantata *Das deutsches Miserere* (The German Miserere), and arias from *Die Verurteilung des Lukullus*. The book contains photographs in addition to music. Production photos of Ernst Busch in *Der kaukasische Kreidekreis*, and tenor Helmut Melchert in *Die Verurteilung des Lukullus* are included with the music for these stage shows. Photos of destroyed cities, dead soldiers, and injured children are included as examples of the horrors of war described in *Das deutsches Miserere*.

The song cycle *Siebenundzwanzig Lieder aus dem Dreistrophenkalendar*, based on poetry by Georg Maurer, includes three volumes, each containing nine songs. Volume one contains songs for coloratura soprano and baritone. Volume two contains songs for lyric soprano and bass. Volume three contains songs for alto and tenor. The songs were published by VEB Deutscher Verlag für Musik in 1975.

The *Brecht Liederbuch* was published in 1983. This collection, compiled, edited, and annotated by Fritz Hennenberg, contains Brecht settings by Dessau, Hanns Eisler, Rudolph Wagner-Régeny, Kurt Weill, and Kurt Schwaen. It includes songs from stage works, agit-propaganda songs, and art songs.

The song discussions in the following chapter will provide a glimpse into the world of Dessau's lieder. Songs of varying styles from different periods in Dessau's output will be discussed. These descriptions will focus on textual subject matter, harmonic vocabulary, form, texture, and accompaniment style. Text setting, which includes discussion of syllabic versus melismatic setting, textual rhythm, and melodic contour's relationship to textual ideas will also be investigated.

CHAPTER 3
SONG DISCUSSIONS

“An die Entfernte” (To the Distant One)

from *Vier Lieder*

for soprano and piano

Unpublished – housed in the Paul Dessau Archive

Catalog Number - PDA 1.74.4

Dessau’s *Vier Lieder* (Four Songs) were composed during his student years in Berlin between 1910 and 1912. These early songs include settings of Otto Ernst, Theodor Storm, and Johann Wolfgang von Goethe. The fourth song of the group, “An die Entfernte” (To the Distant One), was Dessau’s first setting of Goethe. Dessau’s output also includes ten other Goethe settings: *Sieben Lieder* (Seven Songs) based on texts from *Faust*, composed in 1949; “Gärtnerszene” (Garden Scene) based on a text from *Faust*, and “Lesebuch aus West-östlicher Divan,” (Reader from the West-Eastern Divan) both composed in 1953; and “Liebeslied” (Love Song) composed in 1955. Goethe’s poem “An die Entfernte,” also set by Johann Friedrich Reichardt, Karl Friedrich Zelter, and Franz Schubert, concerns lost love and is filled with romantic images such as the wanderer and nature.

Fritz Hennenberg dismisses these four early songs as romantic clichés. He writes that they often fall into the style of salon music, adding that the melody does not lead, but follows the harmonic progression.⁶⁸ Even so, one sees in “An die Entfernte” Dessau’s ability to capture the mood and drama of poetry. The opening of the song is a tonally ambiguous eight-measure piano introduction marked *Andante quasi impressando*.

⁶⁸ Hennenberg, *Dessau: Eine Biographie*, 12-14.

Andante quasi impressando

Piano

mp dolce espress.

p

p

Figure 1. “An Die Entfernte,” meas.1-8.

This same musical material, marked *ausdrucksvoll* (full of expression), is repeated from measures 9 to 16, joined with the voice. Dessau’s use of the unresolved diminished 7th chord in measure 3 is repeated again in measure 11, cleverly punctuating the question “So hab ich wirklich dich verloren?” (So have I truly lost you?).

(ausdrucksvoll)

p So hab ich wirk - lich dich ver - lo - ren?

Piano

dolce

Figure 2. “An die Entfernte,” meas. 9-12.

The accompaniment of measures 13-16, though reiterating the harmonic progression from the beginning of the song, adds arpeggiation in the pianist’s left hand to propel the music.

Bist du, o Schöne mir entflohn?

Piano

pp

pp *poco cres.*

Figure 3. “An die Entfernte,” meas. 13-16.

The accompaniment develops an independent character starting in measure 24. From here until measure 34, Dessau utilizes a high, arpeggiated sixteenth-note figure, which sets the second stanza of the poem apart from the first.

So wie des Wandrers Blick am Morgen ver-

Piano

p

Figure 4. “An die Entfernte,” meas. 24-25.

The accompaniment of the third stanza features upward, sweeping arpeggios.

Piano

Figure 5. “An die Entfernte,” meas. 36-37.

Dessau uses large leaps in the vocal line to highlight the text in several spots including a leap of an augmented 6th to a g# at “noch Klingt” (still sounds) and a major 6th at “so dringet” (thus penetrate).



Figure 6. “An die Entfernte,” meas. 17-18 and 36-37.

Throughout, the text is set syllabically. The composition is through composed, with the piano introduction and postlude framing the song. The harmonic language, though conservative, frequently uses chromaticism to heighten the romantic longing of the poetry.

“Helle Nacht” (Bright Night)

for soprano and piano

Unpublished – housed in the Paul Dessau Archive

Catalog Number - PDA 1.74.154.

“Helle Nacht” (Bright Night) was composed in 1914, two years after Dessau completed his studies at the Klindworth-Schwarwenka Conservatory. Dessau’s early musical language evolved through his experiments in song composition. This is one such example of Dessau experimenting with borrowed styles from prominent song composers. According to Fritz Hennenberg, the orchestrated songs “Inspiration,” a setting of Hermann Hesse, and “Aufblick” (Looking Upwards), a setting of Richard Dehmel, are modeled after Richard Strauss. “Helle Nacht” displays the influence of Max Reger.⁶⁹

The text, by Richard Dehmel (1863-1920), is an atmospheric description of a nighttime scene in the countryside.⁷⁰ Dessau captured the poem’s mood with a highly chromatic, romantic setting and sparse texture. The song, with the tempo indication *Ruhig* (peaceful), begins with a five-measure piano introduction.

⁶⁹ Hennenberg, *Paul Dessau: Eine Biographie*, 12-14.

⁷⁰ The text was also set by Max Reger in 1899 and Anton Webern in 1908.

Ruhig

Piano

Figure 7. “Helle Nacht,” meas. 1-4.

This is followed by a four-measure phrase for the soprano that is accompanied by sustained chords, punctuated by sounds representing twinkling nighttime stars in the piano.

Piano

Figure 8. “Helle Nacht,” meas. 6-7.

The texture becomes less sparse in measures 10-24, as the piano introduces an arpeggiated figure to accompany the voice, as well as countermelodies in the right hand.

The image shows a musical score for three measures. The top staff is for the soprano voice, and the bottom two staves are for the piano. The key signature has one sharp (F#) and the time signature changes from 4/4 to 3/4. The lyrics under the vocal line are: "ein Flüs-tern wohnt im Laub, als nei". The piano accompaniment features sustained chords in the right hand and arpeggiated figures in the left hand.

Figure 9. “Helle Nacht,” meas. 9-11.

At measure 24 the piano texture returns to its sustained chords as the soprano sings “und der Wind, weint leise in den Bäumen.” In measure 27 the piano restates the musical theme from the introduction. In measures 31-32 the piano repeats the arpeggiated musical material presented originally at measure 17. From measure 33 until the end the piano plays sustained whole and half-note chords as the soprano alternates between measures of single pitched, recitative-like lines and soaring melodies. The song is through composed, but cohesion is created through the use of the few returning accompanimental motives and melodic fragments. The time signatures alternate between 3/4 and 4/4. The text setting is completely syllabic. “Helle Nacht” was dedicated to Theo Drill-Orridge, a successful soprano, who he met while he was working at the Hamburg Stadttheater as a *Korrepetitor*.

“Die Räuberballade von Pierre, dem roten Coquillard”⁷¹
 (The Robberballade of Pierre, the Red Bandit)

for low voice and piano
 Unpublished – housed in the Paul Dessau Archive
 Catalog Number – PDA 1.74.0049

Dessau set German translations of several French texts during the 1930s including three settings of François Villon (ca. 1431 - ca. 1471). These Villon settings are “Die

⁷¹ A Coquillard is a rogue or bandit from the time of François Villon.

Räuberballade von Pierre, dem roten Coquillard” composed in 1931; “Ballade du Franc Buveur” (The Ballad of Franc Buveur), composed in 1934; and “Ballade vom guten und schlechten Lebenswandel” (The Ballad of the Good and Bad Life Change), composed in 1936. In addition to the Villon settings, Dessau composed two Verlaine settings: “Écoutez la chanson” (Listen to the Song) in 1939 and *Les voix* in 1940. With the exception of “Die Räuberballade von Pierre, dem roten Coquillard,” all of these songs were written while Dessau was in exile in France. Paul Zech translated the poetry for “Die Räuberballade von Pierre, dem roten Coquillard” from the original French.

“Die Räuberballade von Pierre, dem roten Coquillard” has several repeated piano figures which give this lengthy song a sense of unity and organization. The opening motif is the most frequently occurring. This unstable figure features a bass note on beats one and two, and dissonant, seemingly unrelated chords on the second half of each beat.



Figure 10. “Die Räuberballade von Pierre, dem roten Coquillard,” meas. 1-2.

This figure vividly depicts the unsteady image of Pierre, who, according to the text, is “nicht immer ganz im Gleichgewicht” (not always completely balanced) because of rum and gin. The vocal melody, which is entirely syllabic, rhythmically doubles this figure which immediately creates a sense of the comic. This motif occurs in measures 1-8, 28-35, 55-62, 71-73, and 88-91.

Mit ein-em Al - ten Hut schief im Ge

Figure 11. “Die Räuberballade von Pierre, dem roten Coquillard,” meas. 1-4.

The second most prominent musical motif occurs for the first time at measures 14-16. This motif, announced for the first time in the vocal line, identifies Pierre, the red Coquillard (“das war Pierre, der rote Coquillard”). This motif features a leap of a perfect fifth, followed by a descending scale in dotted sixteenth notes.

Das war der Pierre der ro - te Co - quil - lard

Figure 12. “Die Räuberballade von Pierre, dem roten Coquillard,” meas. 14-17.

It appears in various guises in measures 26-27, 49-52, 70, 75-76, 94-95, and 123-125. It becomes a leitmotif in the song, musically representing the character of Pierre. The tessitura of this piece is low, and simulates speech. It has many repeated notes and very limited leaps. The harmonic language, though frequently featuring non-chord tones, is functional.

“Homesick Blues”
 from *Two Songs*
 for bass/baritone and piano
 Unpublished – housed in the Paul Dessau Archive

The set entitled *Two Songs* was composed while Dessau was in exile in Paris in May of 1934. “Homesick Blues” and “Porter” were Dessau’s first attempts to set English. In the poetry of Langston Hughes Dessau found a voice that spoke of oppression and the racial inequality shared by African-Americans and German Jews. Similarly, Dessau utilized elements of blues and jazz music because of its associations with African Americans.

“Homesick Blues” begins with a four-measure piano introduction that is reminiscent of the vamping of a jazz pianist.

The image shows a musical score for the piano introduction of "Homesick Blues" for measures 1-5. The score is written in 4/4 time with a key signature of one flat (B-flat). It consists of two staves: a treble clef staff and a bass clef staff. The piano part is marked with a piano dynamic (*p*). The first measure features a chromatic glissando in the bass line. The second measure has a triplet of eighth notes in the treble and a triplet of eighth notes in the bass. The third measure has a quintuplet of eighth notes in the treble and a triplet of eighth notes in the bass. The fourth and fifth measures continue the melodic and rhythmic patterns.

Figure 13. “Homesick Blues,” meas. 1-5.

This creates a melancholy mood and projects the aforementioned influence of African-American music. The chromatic glissando in the opening bars of the piano creates a “moaning” or “crying” motif. The vocal line in the first phrase features frequent repeated notes and a limited range.

The image shows a musical score for the vocal line of "Homesick Blues" for measures 5-7. The score is written in 4/4 time with a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The lyrics are: "De rail-road brid - ges a sad song in de air, de rail-road brid - ges,". The vocal line features repeated notes and a triplet in the third measure.

Figure 14. “Homesick Blues,” meas. 5-7.

⁷² The music exists in an early manuscript from March 1934, and a cleaner, more legible copy that was created in 1941. The title page bears the dedication “To Mojhe.”

This static vocal writing adds to the sense of desolation of the text “de railroad bridges a sad song in the air.” At the song’s climax, the text “To keep from cryin’” utilizes the chromatic crying motif that has been heard throughout in the piano.

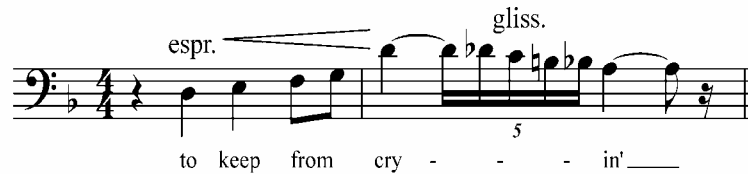


Figure 15. “Homesick Blues,” meas. 30-31.

Dessau repeats the text “I open ma mouth an’ laughs” six times as the song nears its conclusion. The repetition also captures the sense of hopelessness and desperation of the poetry. The harmonic language of the song is tonal with the use of extended tertian chords which strengthen the association with the musical vocabulary of jazz. There also exist fragments of an arrangement of this song for voice and chamber ensemble. The instrumentation of this chamber ensemble, which includes alto saxophone, percussion, and double bass, also displays Dessau’s attempt to create a sound reminiscent of jazz music.

“Die Thälmannkolonne” (The Thälmann Convoy)

for voice or choir and piano
Published in *Zwanzig Lieder* (1950)

Ernst Thälmann (1886-1944) was one of the most significant leaders of the Communist Party of Germany (KPD) during the Weimar Era. Thälmann and many other communists were imprisoned and killed after Hitler’s ascent to power. When the Spanish Civil War erupted in 1936, the International Brigades named themselves after Thälmann. Dessau, inspired by the events in Spain, composed “Die Thälmannkolonne” (The Thälmann Battalion) while in exile in France. Though this song specifically refers to the fighting in Spain, it is also Dessau’s protest against events in Germany. The refrain illustrates this universal call to fight fascism.

Die Heimat ist weit, doch wir sind bereit.
Wir kämpfen und sterben für dich: Freiheit!

The homeland is far, but we are ready.
We are fighting and dying for you: Freedom!

According to Dessau, it quickly became a popular song, not only in Spain, but also in Germany. The German baritone Ernst Busch popularized this song, including it in many concerts. Though Dessau's use of political messages in his music appeared earlier, (i.e. "Kaffeeholer 'raus"), this is Dessau's first communist song. The published version of the song appears in *Zwanzig Lieder*.⁷³

Like many mass/group songs (*Massenlieder*) or fighting songs (*Kampflieder*) this song is a straightforward strophic setting. Many musical elements are simplified for ease of performance by amateurs and large groups. The song features three verses, each four lines in length with alternating rhyme scheme, followed by the refrain. The range of the melody is only a major ninth, with a comfortable tessitura. The accompaniment is homophonic and doubles the vocal melody. The rhythms are crisp and march-like to communicate a militaristic fervor. At the refrain, the rhythmic motion slows. For the first two measures of this refrain the texture changes and a hymn-like mood emerges. The text "Die Heimat ist weit, doch wir sind bereit" features half-note and quarter-note rhythms and a homophonic, chordal accompaniment.

The image shows a musical score for three measures of a song. The top staff is a vocal line in treble clef, 4/4 time, with a key signature of one sharp (F#). The lyrics are "Die Hei - mat ist weit,". The bottom two staves are a piano accompaniment in grand staff (treble and bass clefs), also in 4/4 time and one sharp. The piano part is homophonic and chordal, with the right hand playing chords and the left hand playing a simple bass line.

Figure 16. "Die Thälmannkolonne," meas. 8-10.

In addition, the appearance of a plagal cadence at measure 9 ("ist weit") adds to the impression of the hymn-like style. Although this song is a march, the harmonies of "Die Thälmannkolonne" are not blandly diatonic, but utilize extended tertian chords.

⁷³ The text, though attributed to Karl Ernst in Dessau's 1950 collection, was written by Dessau's first wife, Gudrun Kabisch.

These extended tertian features, which include ninth chords, eleventh chords, and thirteenth chords, are reminiscent of popular song styles and jazz music.

“Lied einer deutschen Mutter” (Song of a German Mother)
for female voice and piano
Published in *Zwanzig Lieder* (1950) and *Brecht Liederbuch* (1998)

This song, composed while Dessau was in exile in the United States, was Dessau’s first collaboration with Bertolt Brecht. The song is one of their simplest, yet most effective protests against war. Brecht’s original idea for this work was to pen the words for a *Moritat*, or *Moritatsgesang* which is ballad that deals with a subversive or morbid theme, frequently murder or death. It is in a simple, folk-like musical language and form. Brecht’s most famous *Moritat*, “Moritat von Mackie Messer” (The Ballad of Mack the Knife) is from his collaboration with Kurt Weill, *Die Dreigroschenoper*. “Lied einer deutschen Mutter” takes the point of view of a mother of a German soldier. In the poem she expresses her grief, stating that she wished she had known that her son’s brown shirt would become his funeral shroud.

Brecht offered the poem to Dessau shortly after their first meeting in New York in 1943. Brecht had already composed a melodic fragment, which Dessau used in the lines, “Hätt ich gewußt, was ich heut weiß” (Had I known what I know now). Hanns Eisler set the same text in 1937, but Brecht claimed to prefer Dessau’s setting.⁷⁴

The song, drawing on the folk style of the *Moritat*, is strophic. The accompaniment is a very simple repeated motive which includes a descending scale figure in the bass, and off-beat chords in the right hand.

⁷⁴ Bertolt Brecht, *Brecht Liederbuch*, ed. Fritz Hennenberg (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp Verlag, 1998), 483.

♩ = 76

Piano

il basso sempre un poco marcato

Figure 17. “Lied einer deutschen Mutter,” meas. 1-2

This accompanimental figure was composed to represent the sound of a *Drehorgel* (hurdy-gurdy), which is associated with the *Moritat*.⁷⁵ The song is composed in a tonal idiom, in the key of E-flat minor. The tempo is marked quarter note = 76. Throughout the the final stroph, the tempo becomes slower, finally slowing to quarter note = 63 for the final line (“es war dein Totenhemd,” it was his death shirt). The melodic climax in every stroph expresses the mother’s regret of her lack of foresight: “Hätt ich gewußt, was ich heut weiß” (“Had I known what I know now”) in verse one, and “denn ich wußte nicht was ich heut weiß” (For I did not know what I know now) in verse four.

hätt ich ge-wusst was ich heut weiss,

Figure 18. “Lied einer deutschen Mutter,” meas. 8-9.

Dessau’s popular and simple style is ironic. He uses this familiar, accessible musical language to communicate the complex grief of a German mother during war time.

The song was dedicated to Brecht’s wife, the German actress Helene Weigel (1900-1971) who recorded the song while in exile in the United States in 1944. Lotte Lenya (1898-1981) also recorded “Lied einer deutschen Mutter” for the U.S. Office of War Information in 1943.

⁷⁵ Hennenberg, *Brecht/Dessau Musicalische Arbeiten*, 392.

“Grabschrift für Gorki” (Epitaph for Gorki)
from *Vier Grabschriften (Four Epitaphs)*
for bass/baritone and piano
Published in *Brecht/Dessau Lieder und Gesänge* (1957)

Between 1947 and 1951 Dessau set four of Brecht’s *Grabschriften* (Epitaphs) as a cycle. These poems memorialize four major political icons who influenced Brecht: Maxim Gorki (1868-1936), Rosa Luxemburg (1870-1919), Karl Liebknecht (1871-1919), and Vladimir Lenin (1870-1924). Dessau’s settings of these *Grabschriften* exist in various arrangements: voice and piano, chorus and orchestra, male chorus and orchestra, and a cappella chorus. The first of these *Grabschriften* was completed while Dessau was living in exile in California.

Maxim Gorki, the Russian/Soviet author and political activist, is the figure celebrated in the first *Grabschrift* composed by Dessau. Composed in 1947, this work exists in three versions. The second version, a slow funeral march for bass voice and piano, is the version discussed here.

The harmonic language of the work combines elements of functional tonality with freely atonal writing. Dessau uses progressive musical vocabulary to represent the liberal political ideas of Maxim Gorki. Dessau uses a slow tempo (quarter note = 66) and a somber mood to create a moving musical setting of an epitaph. The piano introduction is an important recurring theme. After it is completed in measure 5, it is repeated in its entirety in measures 6-11.

$\text{♩} = 66$
etwas markiert und gehalten

Piano

Figure 19 “Grabschrift für Gorki,” meas. 1-4.

A variant of this same theme appears at the end of the work, rounding out the piece. Dessau's vocal melody is syllabic, uses mostly stepwise motion and avoids extremes of range. The highpoint of the vocal line comes in measure 24, with a D-flat sustained for two beats over a series of dissonant chords.

The image shows a musical score for measure 24 of "Grabschrift für Gorki." It consists of three staves. The top staff is the vocal line in bass clef, 4/4 time, with a key signature of three flats. The vocal melody is syllabic, with the lyrics "ab - schaf-fen" written below it. A slur covers the final two notes, which are D-flat and E-flat. The piano accompaniment is shown in two staves below, with a brace on the left labeled "Piano". The right hand plays chords, and the left hand plays single notes.

Figure 20. "Grabschrift für Gorki," meas. 24.

This vocal climax stresses the role Gorki played in the abolishment of the "System von Hoch und Niedrig" (System of the High and Low). The end of the song is the only section of the song that reaches a forte dynamic level which expresses the importance of the final line of text: "der Lehrer des Volkes, der vom Volk gelernt hat" ("the teacher of the people, who had learned from the people.")

"Aufbaulied der FDJ" (Construction Song of the Free German Youth)⁷⁶
published in *Zwanzig Lieder* (1950) and in the *Brecht Liederbuch* (1998)

In the early years of the GDR, a need arose for art that inspired the rebuilding of the country's infrastructure. The genre *Aufbaulyrik* (construction poetry) emerged from this need. The poetry was optimistic and supported the building of a socialist state. Two of Brecht's poems from 1949, "Zukunftslied" and "Aufbaulied der FDJ," are examples of

⁷⁶ The *Freie deutsche Jugend* (Free German Youth) or FDJ was the official youth movement of the GDR.

this genre. Both texts were written with the intent that they would be set to music. The poetry has no personal voice, but rather speaks for the masses.

Dessau set both of the texts in 1949. They are intended to be performed by groups of amateur musicians, thus they considered *Massenlieder* (Mass Songs). All of the musical elements are crafted with this goal in mind. The harmonic language of “Aufbaulied der JFD” is conservative, but Dessau uses colorful non-chord tones to flavor the traditional harmonies. The simple melody encompasses a major ninth and uses frequently repeated notes and small leaps, which combined with the syllabic text setting, makes the song seem speech-like. The rhythm is energetic in order to communicate the optimism of the text. Dessau and Brecht both agreed that this song, though a march, would not fall into the heavy-footed Prussian style marches of the past, but instead created a work with a lively tempo.⁷⁷ There exist various arrangements of the song, including a version for choir and orchestra, as well as voice and piano.

“Deutschland 1952” (Germany 1952)

for voice and piano

Published in *Brecht/Dessau Lieder und Gesänge* (1957)

“Deutschland 1952” is one of Dessau’s most beautiful and haunting songs. Brecht’s moving text and Dessau’s musically simple setting capture the melancholy of postwar Germany. The song, in the key of E minor, begins with seven measures of a repeated E minor triad. At the vocal entrance (measure 2), dissonance is created on every downbeat, with resolutions on the second beat. This melodic idea, similar to an unprepared suspension, occurs frequently throughout the song.

⁷⁷ Dessau, *Paul Dessau: aus Gesprächen*, 72.

♩ = 84

p

O Deutsch-land, wie bist du zer - ris - sen

Piano

fp molto legato

Figure 21. “Deutschland 1952,” meas. 1-6.

The harmonic language is functional, but with a free use of dissonance. Dessau employs dramatic text painting in several places. At measure 6, on the word “zerrissen”(torn apart), Dessau uses the leap of a descending fifth. With this, Dessau musically depicts the state of Germany in 1952: a country internally torn asunder. At measure 17 Dessau uses an ascending leap of a minor sixth to highlight the text “schlägt” (to beat or hit). This sudden leap musically captures the inner violence of the country where “in Kält’ und Finsternissen schlägt eins aufs andre ein” (in the cold and darkness one beats another). At the climax of the song (measure 29), Dessau allows the voice to soar to the highest pitch of the song. This ascending musical line beautifully captures the Brecht’s text: “Und hätt’st so schöne Auen und reger Städte viel” (And you would have such beautiful plains and so many lively cities). After this, the piano continues the crescendo, while playing a descending “moaning” motif.

The image shows a musical score for three staves. The top staff is a vocal line in treble clef. The middle and bottom staves are for piano accompaniment, with the middle staff in treble clef and the bottom staff in bass clef. The key signature has one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 2/4. The piano part includes chords and a melodic line with accents. The word "viel:" is written above the piano part in the second measure.

Figure 22. “Deutschland 1952,” meas. 29-31.

After this, a simple diatonic melody in the vocal line emerges to conclude: “Tätst du dir selbst vertrauen, wär alles Kinderspiel” (If you only had trusted yourself, it would have all been child’s play). The piano then ends the lied with a somber, ten-measure postlude.

“Schöne Tage” (“Beautiful Days”)

from *Siebenundzwanzig Lieder aus dem Dreistrophenkalendar*
for bass and piano
published in Heft II (Volume II) of *Siebenundzwanzig Lieder aus dem
Dreistrophenkalendar* (1975)

Dessau’s largest collection of songs is the massive *Siebenundzwanzig Lieder aus dem Dreistrophenkalendar*. The texts are taken from Georg Maurer’s *Dreistrophenkalendar*. Maurer was one of the GDR’s most influential poets and essayists. He was associated with the Leipzig Institute of Literature from 1955 until his death in 1971. His most famous collection, *Dreistrophenkalendar*, was completed in 1951, but was not published until 1961. The eighty-five poems in this collection all consist of three stanzas, four lines each and deal primarily of the themes of love and nature.

Dessau composed the twenty-seven songs sporadically over a four year period. He wrote his first four in 1963, five more in 1964 and only two in 1965. In 1966 the Deutsche Staatsoper commissioned him to complete a concert work. Having already eleven songs composed from the *Dreistrophenkalendar*, Dessau decided to complete a

cycle of twenty-seven songs. He composed seven more in 1966 and completed the cycle by writing a final ten songs in 1967.

“Schöne Tage,” (composed in 1966) like the other songs in this cycle, is atonal. There is no time signature, and bar lines are only hinted at with the use of dotted lines to indicate phrase endings. As with many of Dessau’s songs from this time period, the piano part sustains tone clusters, over which the melody line is presented. There is no doubling or counterpoint between the voice and piano in the A section. In the B section however, there is the use of melodic doubling and echo between the voice and piano. Like the other songs in the cycle, “Schöne Tage” is very virtuosic. It contains highly complex rhythms and difficult atonal pitch sequences. The voice is called upon to make very specific and rapid changes of dynamics and registers. Like many other songs in the cycle, (including “Mittags,” “Der Friede trägt,” and “Die Nachtigall,”) “Schöne Tage” includes several melismatic passages. Compared to the syllabic setting of some of his earlier songs, this is radically different. This use of melismatic passages, and the other previously mentioned virtuosic demands, demonstrates Dessau composing songs to be performed by accomplished singers. Formally, “Schöne Tage” can be divided into a binary form; ABA¹. The first two lines of pitches in A are repeated almost exactly in A¹.

The image shows a musical score for the song "Schöne Tage". The title "Schöne Tage" is written at the top left. Below it, there are handwritten annotations: "ca. 72" and "breve". The score is written on three staves: a vocal line (soprano clef), a piano right hand (treble clef), and a piano left hand (bass clef). The vocal line contains the lyrics: "Komm, o kom-me Re⁵ - - 5 - gen! Die - 3 - sen". The piano accompaniment consists of sustained tone clusters in both hands. The score includes various musical notations such as dynamics (f, sf), articulation (accents), and phrasing (brackets and slurs). The overall style is atonal and complex.

Figure 23 “Schöne Tage,” page 1, phrase 1, A.

Figure 24. “Schöne Tage,” page 3, phrase 1, A¹.

Dessau’s repetition of musical material in A¹ creates a sense of unity that aids the listener in grasping the highly dissonant atonal idiom.

Tierversen

for voice and piano, voice and guitar, or voice and *Guitarrenklavier*
Published in *Brecht Liederbuch* (1998)

Composers have frequently been drawn to collections of poems about animals. Ravel’s *Histoires Naturelles* (Natural History) and Poulenc’s *Le Bestiaire* (The Bestiary) are famous examples of song cycles that utilize such poetry. Between 1967 and 1973, Dessau set ten of Brecht’s animal verses. Brecht uses anthropomorphized animals to spin his biting socio-political satire. In 1967 Dessau chose “Das Schwein,” “Die Ziege,” “Der Hund,” “Der Elefant,” and “Der Kamel” for *Fünf Tierversen*. These songs exist in various versions. The first version was for a cappella choir. It was composed for Dessau’s young students at the primary school in Zeuthen. The second version is for voice and piano. In 1972 Dessau returned to this Brecht poetry and composed “Der Adler,” “Der Rabe,” “Eine Kellerassel,” and “Die Igel” for voice and guitar or *Guitarrenklavier*.⁷⁸ Dessau’s final animal verse, “Das Pferd” for voice and *Guitarrenklavier*, was completed in 1973.

⁷⁸ The *Guitarrenklavier* is a prepared piano that utilizes thumbtacks in the piano hammers. It is also referred to by other German composers as a *Reissnagelklavier* or *Reisszweckenklavier*. The English name for this type of prepared piano is “tack piano.”

Melodically, the *Tierverser* appear to be simple songs. The majority of the vocal melodie, which are doubled in the accompaniment, uses stepwise motion. Dessau uses non-functional harmonies in the accompaniment to bring the humor to the foreground. “Das Pferd” provides an example of this type of writing. The translation is as follows:

There once was a horse
 That was not worth very much
 For racing it was too dumb
 When tethered to the wagon, it fell over
 Then it became a politician,
 He is now highly revered.

In measure 16, after it is revealed that the horse became a politician, Dessau utilizes rapidly moving series of dissonant notes.



Figure 25. “Das Pferd,” meas. 16.

This gesture creates a musical laugh that responds to the ridiculous scenario and prepares the listener for the song’s punch line: “Es ist jetzt hochgeehrt” (He is now highly revered).

Dessau musically captures the lumbering, “idiotic” elephant with his plodding melody in “Der Elefant.”



Figure 26. “Der Elefant,” meas. 1-2.

Likewise he captures the lack of patience and lack of foresight of the one-legged, “right-wing” pig in “Das Schwein,” the accompaniment of which features scales of sixteenth notes that resemble a classical piano etude.

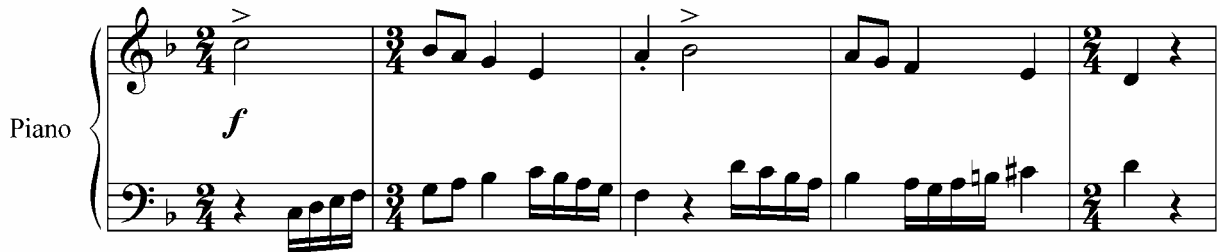


Figure 27. “Das Schwein,” meas. 1-5.

Dessau’s use of *Guitarrenklavier* creates an interesting timbre for these satirical songs. The prepared piano produces a tinny, toy-like color that adds a sense of childish simplicity to the already melodically simple and accompanimentally sparse songs.

“Bombardement”

from *Drei Gesänge nach Gedichten von Pablo Neruda* (Three Songs after Poems of Pablo Neruda)

for alto/mezzo-soprano and piano
published by Edition Peters (1974)

Composed in 1974, the *Drei Gesänge* were among the last twelve songs Dessau composed.⁷⁹ They are for alto/mezzo-soprano and piano. The poems used in *Drei Gesänge* are from *Tercera residencia* (Third Residence), by Pablo Neruda. *Tercera residencia*, written between 1936 and 1937 is Neruda’s artistic response to the tragedy of the Spanish Civil War. The fourth poem of *Tercera residencia* is a lengthy, multi-sectioned work entitled “España en el corazón: Himno a las glorias del pueblo en guerra” (Spain in My Heart: Hymn to the Glory of People in War). The German translation used by Dessau is credited to Erich Arendt. Dessau excerpted lines from three sections of this

⁷⁹ Following the 1974 publication of *Drei Gesänge nach Gedichten von Pablo Neruda*, Dessau composed *Vier Lieder* based on texts of Jewtuschenko, *Drei Lieder* on texts of Heine, and *Zwei Gedichte* on texts of Mickel.

poem for *Drei Gesänge*.⁸⁰ The content of *Tercera residencia* is highly political. In these poems Neruda “speaks directly of what he, Pablo Neruda, has witnessed in Spain.”⁸¹ He “begins to voice societal concerns with the vigor of a pamphleteer and the conviction of a missionary.”⁸² The style of these poems, though less experimental than earlier Neruda poetry, is declamatory and contains a mixture of traditional and classic forms with free verse. The excerpts chosen by Dessau are unrhymed free verse. The songs combine freely atonal writing, serialism, and aleatoric passages. Each song is only two pages in length.

“Bombardement,” the first of the three songs, communicates the horror of a bombing. The song contains no time signature or bar lines, but rather is divided into seven musical events. These musical events are most often delineated by sustained tone clusters in the piano. The piano strikes the first dissonant cluster, and the chord is left ringing for the entire first line. This cluster includes the intervals of a tritone and a minor seventh in the left hand and a stack of three notes, each separated by a half step, in the right hand.

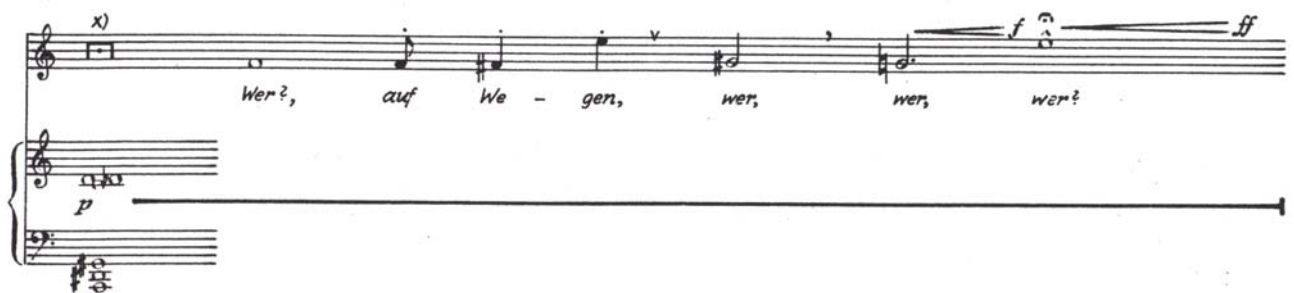


Figure 28. “Bombardement,” page 1, line 1.

On the second page Dessau uses an ostinato in the piano to delineate the fourth musical event. This is an example of an aleatoric passage in this group of songs.

⁸⁰ Maguerite Lynn Kadlec, “Selected Works for Solo Voice Set to Texts of Pablo Neruda.” (D.M. diss., Indiana University, 1982), 137-139.

⁸¹ René de Costa, *The Poetry of Pablo Neruda*. (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1982), 94.

⁸² *Ibid.* 92.

The image shows a musical score for the piece "Bombardement". It consists of two staves. The top staff is for the vocal line, and the bottom staff is for the piano accompaniment. The vocal line begins with the instruction *subf* and the lyrics "Wer?". There is a long rest following this. The piano accompaniment starts with a dynamic of *f* and a tempo marking of $\text{♩} = \text{ca. } 80$. The vocal line resumes with the instruction *frei (gegen den Rhythmus) sotto voce* and the lyrics "Es stürzt A - sche, stürzt Eisen her -". The piano accompaniment features a repeated piano figure with dynamics *ppp* and *p*, and includes a triplet and a quintuplet.

Figure 29. "Bombardement," page 2, line 1.

Dessau creates a chilling mood through his use of rests and pauses. His instructions at the bottom of the first page indicate four different types of pauses, from the shortest to the longest. The use of displaced margins within Neruda's poetry is a device used to measure a dramatic pause. Dessau adapts this at the end of the first page with the use of a fermata over a rest. On the second page Dessau uses a repeated piano figure, over which the vocalist sings in a free tempo. The vocal line is very jagged and frequently uses large dramatic leaps to highlight such words as "*Klage*" (lament) and "*Flammen*" (flames). The songs were dedicated to the German mezzo-soprano Annelise Burmeister (1930-1988).

CONCLUSION

The songs discussed in this treatise display the variety of styles and musical influences in Dessau's oeuvre. His early works draw from the romantic traditions of the lied. This is evident in the songs "An die Entfernte," and "Helle Nacht." During the 1920s and 1930s, elements of jazz music can be found in Dessau's lieder. This is most evident in the *Two Songs*, based on the poetry of Langston Hughes. It is also during these two decades that Dessau began using Jewish folk music in his compositions. While Dessau was in exile during the 1930s and 1940s, he composed atonal and serial compositions. Examples of this compositional style include *Les voix* and "Grabschrift für Gorki." Later works in Dessau's oeuvre, including *Siebenundzwanzig Lieder aus dem Dreistrophenkalendar* and *Drei Gesänge nach Gedichten von Pablo Neruda*, draw from many of the previously mentioned musical influences and also include aleatoric elements.

Dessau's songs also display the intersection of music and political history. The songs "Homesick Blues," "Die Thälmannkolonne," "Lied einer deutschen Mutter," and "Deutschland 1952" are very personal statements protesting fascism and war. Dessau's commitment to communist politics and the use of his music for political aims is evident in "Grabschrift für Gorki" and "Aufbaulied der FDJ." The political control of the arts through the mandated adoption of the tenets of socialist realism and the *Bitterfeldweg* had an interesting effect on Dessau's work. His late works display an increased use of dissonance, atonality, and indeterminacy. Believing that a progressive political country should have a similarly progressive art and music, Dessau composed works without reservations or fear of governmental censorship. *Siebenundzwanzig Lieder aus dem Dreistrophenkalendar*, and *Drei Gesänge nach Gedichten von Pablo Neruda* are examples of Dessau's most radical compositions.

With the Cold War in the past, it is time to reevaluate composers from the GDR such as Paul Dessau. Although communist political music may not be appropriate to program on concerts and recitals, it is a historical reality and deserves mention in music history classes. Although Dessau's oeuvre contains a large amount of political and agit-propaganda music, there also exist a significant number of songs and song cycles that are suitable for recitals performed by students, young artists, or professional singers.

APPENDIX

Chronological List of Dessau Lieder

1910-1912

Vier Lieder

An einen leisen Bach (Otto Ernst)
Allein im Dunkel (Otto Ernst)
Über die Heide (Theodor Storm)
An die Entfernte (Johann Wolfgang von Goethe)
Soprano and Piano

1914

Verkündigung (Richard Dehmel)
Soprano and Piano

Helle Nacht (Richard Dehmel)
Soprano and Piano

Schlummerlied eines Landsturmmannes (Martin Jaeger)
Tenor and Piano

Vier Lieder (Heinrich Bredow)

Wer?
Es darf nicht sein
Der Totensee
Röschen
Soprano and Piano

Betrachtung (Lotte Lehmann)
Soprano and Piano

1917

Liebesbrief (Otto Julius Bierbaum)
Soprano or Alto and Piano, also with Orchestra

Beruhigung (Otto Julius Bierbaum)
Soprano or Mezzo-soprano and Piano, also with Orchestra

Aufblick (Richard Dehmel)
Baritone and Piano, also with Orchestra

1918

Schlaflied für Ester Duelberg (Paul Dessau)
Soprano and Piano

1919

Nachglanz (Richard Dehmel)
Soprano and Piano

Lyrisches Intermezzo (Heinrich Heine)
Mezzo-soprano and Piano

1923

Traurige Tänze (Stefan George)
Soprano and Piano

1924

Vier Marienlieder (Folk texts, edited by Otto Zoff)
Soprano and Chamber Ensemble (Flute, Oboe, Three Violins, Viola, Cello,
Double bass)
Maria ging übers
Gebirgle Maria durch 'nen Dornenwald ging
Es fiel ein Himmelstau
Im Himmel beim Christkind

1927

Sterblich (Christina Rossetti, translated by Alfred Kerr)
Soprano and Piano

1930-31

Die Räuberballade vom Pierre, dem roten Coquillard (François Villon, translated by
Paul Zech)
Bass/Baritone and Piano

Kaffeeholer 'raus: ein ernstes Soldatenlied (Paul Dessau)
Voice and Piano

1934

Ballade du Franc Buveur (François Villon)
Voice and Piano

The Young British Soldier (Rudyard Kipling)
Voice and Piano

Two Songs (Langston Hughes)
Homesick Blues
Porter
Bass and Piano

1936

Kampflied der schwarzen Strohhüte from *Die heilige Johanna der Schlachthöfe* (Bertolt Brecht)

Voice and Piano, published in *Brecht/Dessau Lieder und Gesänge*

Zeitungsbericht über den Tod von Rudolf Claus

Voice and Piano

No pasaran! (Paul Dessau)

Voice and Piano

An die Armeen Europas (Erich Weinert)

Voice and Piano, published in *Zwanzig Lieder*

Die Thälmannkolonne (Gudrun Kabisch, originally attributed to Karl Ernst)

Voice and Piano, published in *Zwanzig Lieder*

Illegales Flüsterlied

Voice and Piano

Bearbeitung zweier polnischer Volkslieder (Yiddish Folk Text)

Voice and Piano

Ballade vom guten und schlechten Lebenswandel (François Villon)

Voice and Piano

1937

Ein spanisches Lied von Stalin (Sancho Perez, translated by Gregor Russ)

Voice and Piano, published in *Zwanzig Lieder*

Al ssefa jam kinereth (Palestinian)

Voice and Piano

Captain Potato (Karl Ernst and Gudrun Kabisch)

Voice and Piano, published in *Zwanzig Lieder*

Der tote Soldat in Spanien (Karl Ernst and Gudrun Kabisch)

Voice and Piano, published in *Zwanzig Lieder*

Serment du rassemblement du 14 juillet 1935 (Chanson du front d'unité)

Voice and Piano

Abbitte (Friedrich Hölderlin)

Soprano and Piano

1938

Der kleine Barfuß (Eugène Pottier, translated by Erich Weinert)
Voice and Piano

Schlummerlied für Anja (Peter Karl Höfler)
Voice and Piano

1939

Télégramme de R.
Voice and Piano

Écoutez la chanson (Paul Verlaine)
Voice and Piano

Les voix (Paul Verlaine)
Voice and Piano (also Voice, Piano and Orchestra 1941)

Ani (Hebrew)
Voice and Piano

Shuri chavatselet (Hebrew)
Voice and Piano

Ono tovo (Weintraud)
Voice and Piano

Arjuna (Hebrew)
Soprano and Piano

Sapperi (Hebrew)
Soprano and Piano

1943

Materialist (Eva Byron)
Soprano and Piano

Lied einer deutschen Mutter (Bertolt Brecht)
Voice and Piano, published in *Zwanzig Lieder*

Das deutsche Miserere (Bertolt Brecht)
Voice and Piano

Deutschland (Bertolt Brecht)
Voice and Piano, (also Voice and Four Instruments)

Horst-Dussel-Lied (Bertolt Brecht)
Voice and Piano

1944-1945

Vier Lieder des Glücksgotts (Bertolt Brecht)
Freunde, wenn ihr euch mir verschreibt
Freunde, wenn ich die Würfel euch werf
Söhnlein, kauf dir einen Strick
Als die Frau schrie unter der Axt
Tenor and Guitar, published in *Brecht/Dessau Lieder und Gesänge*

Kriegslied, first version (Matthias Claudius)
Voice and Piano, published in *Zwanzig Lieder*

1945

Entreat me not (The Bible)
Voice and Piano

1947

Kriegslied, second version (Matthias Claudius)
Voice and Piano, published in *Zwanzig Lieder*

Die Graugans (Bertolt Brecht)
Voice and Piano, published in *Zwanzig Lieder*

Wiegenlied (Bertolt Brecht)
Voice and Guitar

1948

Lied für Nina (James Joyce)
Voice and Piano

1949

Aufbaulied der FDJ (Bertolt Brecht)
Voice and Piano, published in *Zwanzig Lieder*

Zukunftslied (Bertolt Brecht)
Voice and Piano, published in *Zwanzig Lieder*

Musik zu Faust I (Johann Wolfgang von Goethe)
7 Lieder published by Thüringer Volksverlag Weimar

Fünf Kinderlieder (Bertolt Brecht)
Vom Kind, das sich nicht waschen wollte
Der Pflaumenbaum
Kleines Bettlied
Mein Bruder war ein Flieger

Der Gottseibeius
Voice and Piano, or Guitar

1950

Und was bekam des Soldaten Weib? (Bertolt Brecht)
Voice and Piano, published in *Zwanzig Lieder*

Hallo, Bruder aus Warschau! (Armin Müller)
Voice and Piano, published in *Zwanzig Lieder* (also for Voice and Three
Instruments)

Ballade vom Arbeiterjungen und zwei Generals (Armin Müller)
Voice and Piano, published in *Zwanzig Lieder*

Zwei Lieder (Jakob Michael Reinhold Lenz)
Wo bist du jetzt
Das Herz
Voice and Piano

Zwei Lieder für Hennigsdorf (Maria Langner)
Breif an Lene
Freiheit, die wir meinen
Voice and Piano

Čest praci, Welt (Louis Fürnberg)
Voice and Piano, published in *Zwanzig Lieder*

Der Kämpfen vor Madrid (Günter Kunert)
Voice and Piano, published in *Zwanzig Lieder*

Schweige nicht! (Willi Layh)
Voice and Piano, published in *Zwanzig Lieder*

Kriegslied, third version (Matthias Claudius)
Voice and Piano, in *Zwanzig Lieder*

Die sieben Schwestern (Tuan Mu Hung Liang, translated by Martin Remané)
Voice, Clarinet and Percussion

An die Jugend (Heinz Rusch)
Voice and Piano, published in *Zwanzig Lieder*

Der Friede auf Erden (Jaroslaw Iwaszkiewicz, translated by Paul Wiens)
Voice and Piano, published in *Zwanzig Lieder*

1951

Thomas Münzer im Land (Friedrich Wolf)
Voice and Piano

Wort and die Vereinten Nationen (Arkadi Kuleschow)
Voice and Piano

Friede (Pablo Neruda, trans. Erich Arendt)
Voice and Piano

Das lachende Herz, second version (Johannes R. Becher)
Voice and Piano

Vier Liebeslieder (Bertolt Brecht)
Als ich nachher von dir ging
Wenn du mich lustig machst
Sieben Rosen hat der Strauch
Die Liebste gab mir einen Zweig
Voice and Guitar

Vier Chansons für Robert Trösch (Erich Brehm)
Fürchtet euch nicht
Demokrat und Demokratiten
Das Gespenst vom Eisernen Vorhang
Soldaten
Voice and Piano

Friedenslied (Bertolt Brecht)
Two A Cappella Voices, published in *Brecht/Dessau Lieder und Gesänge*

Die Freunde/Begrüßung (Bertolt Brecht)
1st Version – Voice and Piano; published in *Brecht/Dessau Lieder und Gesänge*
2nd Version – Voice Solo
3rd Version – Voice, Flute, String Quartet under the title “Begrüßung”

Philipp Müller, Sohn des Vaterlands (Paul Wiens)
Voice and Piano

Auch in der Ferne (Johann Wolfgang von Goethe)
Voice and Guitar

Deutschland 1952 (Bertolt Brecht)
Voice and Piano, published in *Brecht/Dessau Lieder und Gesänge*

1953

Gärtnerszene aus Faust II (Johann Wolfgang von Goethe)
Voice and Piano

Lesebuch aus West-östlicher Divan (Johann Wolfgang von Goethe)
Voice and Piano

Jacobs Söhne ziehen aus (Bertolt Brecht)
Voice and Piano, published in Brecht/Dessau *Lieder und Gesänge*

Deutschland 1850 (August Heinrich Hoffmann von Fallersleben)
Voice and Piano

1954

Vier Chansons (Erich Brehm)
Affe aus der Urzeit
Hm, das riecht
Prologus
Englein mit kleinen Fehlern
Voice and Piano

Tailors Lied vom guten König (Anonymous 16th Century Text)
Voice and Guitar

1955

Mutter und Kind (Friedrich Wolf)
Voice and Piano, or String Orchestra

Fünf Lieder

Ein Herz laviert nicht (Joachim Ringelnatz)
Wir Vögel singen nicht egal (Matthius Claudius)
An R. (Joachim Ringelnatz)
Die Liebe (Matthias Claudius)
Liebeslied (Johann Wolfgang von Goethe)
Voice and Piano

1956

Der anachronistische Zug (Bertolt Brecht)
Voice and Piano

1957

Den mutigen Achtzen (Ernst Schumacher)
Voice and Piano

Kindergebetchen (Joachim Ringelnatz)
Voice and Piano

Die Sowjetfahne (Karl Grünberg)
Voice and Piano

1958

Wir wollen Frieden auf lange Dauer (Unknown)
Voice and Piano

Ballade von der Gerichtsbarkeit (Jens Gerlach)
Voice and Piano

Lied von der roten Mauer (Peter Hacks)
Voice and Piano

Lied vom 16 November (Erich Brehm)
Voice and Piano

1960

Stimme seiner Klasse (Jens Gerlach)
Voice and Piano

1961

Lied der Partei (Jens Gerlach)
Voice and Piano (also with wind orchestra)

Lied für Kuba: Venceremos (Jens Gerlach and Paul Dessau)
Voice and Piano

Gratulation für Willi Bredel (Jens Gerlach)
Voice and Piano

Friedensvertrag: "Jetzt ist die Zeit" (Karl Mickel)
Voice and Piano (also with wind orchestra)

Programm der Kommunisten: "Kommunisten verändern die Welt" (Helmut Baierl)
Voice and Piano (also with wind orchestra)

Aufgebotslied (Volker Braun)
Voice and Piano (also with wind orchestra)

Mohammed Ben Bella (Karl Mickel)
Baritone and various instruments

1963

Kosmonaut VI (Karl Mickel)
Voice and Piano

Froher Morgen from *Siebenundzwanzig Lieder aus dem Dreistrophenkalendar* (Georg Maurer)
Soprano and Piano

An die Bäume from *Siebenundzwanzig Lieder aus dem Dreistrophenkalendar* (Georg Maurer)
Soprano and Piano

Intermezzo from *Siebenundzwanzig Lieder aus dem Dreistrophenkalendar* (Georg Maurer)
Soprano and Piano

Menschenwitz from *Siebenundzwanzig Lieder aus dem Dreistrophenkalendar* (Georg Maurer)
Soprano and Piano

Kleines Trinklied für Christine Wekwerth (Paul Dessau)
Voice and Piano

1964

Am Froschtümpel from *Siebenundzwanzig Lieder aus dem Dreistrophenkalendar* (Georg Maurer)
Baritone and Piano

Rundgesang (Volker Braun)
Voice and Piano

Der Schlaf from *Siebenundzwanzig Lieder aus dem Dreistrophenkalendar* (Georg Maurer)
Baritone and Piano

Konzert from *Siebenundzwanzig Lieder aus dem Dreistrophenkalendar* (Georg Maurer)
Soprano, Baritone and Piano

Verwehn from *Siebenundzwanzig Lieder aus dem Dreistrophenkalendar* (Georg Maurer)
Soprano and Piano

Das Walroß from *Siebenundzwanzig Lieder aus dem Dreistrophenkalendar* (Georg Maurer)
Baritone and Piano

1965

Alles für die Liebste from *Siebenundzwanzig Lieder aus dem Dreistrophenkalendar* (Georg Maurer)
Bass and Piano

Nichts oder alles (Heinz Kahlau)
Voice and Piano

Fantasie von übermorgen (Erich Kästner)
Voice and Piano

An meine Landsleute (Bertolt Brecht)
Voice and Piano

Kleines Lied (Bertolt Brecht)
Voice and Piano

Das tote Kind (Nazim Hikmet)
Voice and Piano

Die Nachtigall from *Siebenundzwanzig Lieder aus dem Dreistrophenkalendar* (Georg
Maurer)
Soprano and Piano

1966

Übt Solidarität! (Text from the *Berliner Zeitung*)
Voice and Piano

Moderne Legende (Bertolt Brecht)
Voice and Piano

Sonnenuntergang from *Siebenundzwanzig Lieder aus dem Dreistrophenkalendar* (Georg
Maurer)
Soprano and Piano

Mittags from *Siebenundzwanzig Lieder aus dem Dreistrophenkalendar* (Georg Maurer)
Soprano, Bass and Piano

Schöne Tage from *Siebenundzwanzig Lieder aus dem Dreistrophenkalendar* (Georg
Maurer)
Bass and Piano

Der Stör from *Siebenundzwanzig Lieder aus dem Dreistrophenkalendar* (Georg Maurer)
Soprano and Piano

Der Friede trägt from *Siebenundzwanzig Lieder aus dem Dreistrophenkalendar* (Georg
Maurer)
Soprano, Bass and Piano

Mein Kind from *Siebenundzwanzig Lieder aus dem Dreistrophenkalendar* (Georg
Maurer)
Soprano and Piano

1967

Licht from *Siebenundzwanzig Lieder aus dem Dreistrophenkalendar* (Georg Maurer)
Soprano and Piano

- Weltklavier from *Siebenundzwanzig Lieder aus dem Dreistrophenkalendar* (Georg Maurer)
Tenor and Piano
- Gesellschaft from *Siebenundzwanzig Lieder aus dem Dreistrophenkalendar* (Georg Maurer)
Alto and Piano
- Küsse from *Siebenundzwanzig Lieder aus dem Dreistrophenkalendar* (Georg Maurer)
Alto and Piano
- Stille from *Siebenundzwanzig Lieder aus dem Dreistrophenkalendar* (Georg Maurer)
Alto and Piano
- Dreistrophig from *Siebenundzwanzig Lieder aus dem Dreistrophenkalendar* (Georg Maurer)
Tenor and Piano
- Rundgesang from *Siebenundzwanzig Lieder aus dem Dreistrophenkalendar* (Georg Maurer)
Alto, Tenor and Piano
- Zu den Sternen from *Siebenundzwanzig Lieder aus dem Dreistrophenkalendar* (Georg Maurer)
Alto and Piano
- Philosophen und die Liebe from *Siebenundzwanzig Lieder aus dem Dreistrophenkalendar* (Georg Maurer)
Tenor and Piano
- Jahreskreis from *Siebenundzwanzig Lieder aus dem Dreistrophenkalendar* (Georg Maurer)
Alto and Piano
- Hanoi 66 (Te Hanh, translated by Paul Wiens)
Voice and Piano
- Fünf Tierversen* (Bertolt Brecht)
Das Schwein
Die Ziege
Der Hund
Der Elefant
Der Kamel
Voice and Piano (also a cappella choir)

1968

Grabschrift für Gorki, third version
Voice and Guitar

Zwei Gesänge aus dem Roman "Die Mutter" (Maxim Gorki)
Voice and Guitar

Denn es ist dein Gesetz (Max Zimmering)
Voice and Piano

Kleines Wiegenlied für Antje Ronnenberg
Voice and Piano

Klein Li möchte schlafen (Rita Ranke)
Voice and Guitar

1969

Fünf Lieder (Eva Strittmatter)
Natürlich möcht auch ich den Menschen nützlich sein
Chagall
Abendwind
Mondschnnee
Angst
Voice and Guitar

*Fünf kleine Lieder mit Schülern der Klasse 8b der Allgemeinbildenden Polytechnischen
Oberschule I Zeuthen*

Dank sie euch allen
Die DDR besteht seit zwanzig Jahren
Noch jung ist unsere Republik
In Mexiko, das kann man sagen
Die Menschen der ganzen Welt sollen glücklich sein
Voice and Piano

Höre, Israel (Erich Fried)
Voice and Piano

1970

Die USA-Compagnie (Son Mi)
Voice and Piano

Lenin-Lied (Heiner Müller)
Voice and Piano

Seht die tausend Wände (Maxim Dessau)
Voice and Guitar

Gespräch mit einem Kind über Lenin (Anna Segher)
Two Voices and Piano

Lied des Kommunismus (Volker Braun)
Voice and Piano

1971

Lied von der neuen Erde (Johannes R. Becher)
Voice and Piano

Zwei Sonette (William Shakespeare)
Sonett 32: Wenn du allein zurückgeblieben bist
Sonett 88: Kommt dir die Laune an
Soprano and Instruments

So wird es sein (Volker Braun)
Voice and Piano

1972

Vier Tierversen (Bertolt Brecht)
Der Adler
Die Rabe
Die Kellerassel
Der Igel
Voice, Gitarrenklavier, Guitar

Ein Fluß möchte ich sein (Bärbel Fricke)
Voice and Piano

Die junge Welt ist in Berlin zu Gast (Jens Gerlach, Paul Dessau)
Voice and Piano

1973

Historie vom verliebten Schwein Malchus (Bertolt Brecht)
Voice and Piano

Spruch (Bertolt Brecht)
Voice and Piano

General, dein Tank ist ein starker Wagen (Bertolt Brecht)
Voice and Piano

Es war einmal ein Pferd (Bertolt Brecht)
Voice and Gitarrenklavier

FDJ-Lied (Uwe Störmer)
Voice and Piano

Sonett 8: Du bist Musik dem Ohr (William Shakespeare)
Soprano and Instruments

1974

Drei Gesänge nach Gedichten von Pablo Neruda (Pablo Neruda, translated by Erich
Arendt)
Bombardement
Sieg der Waffen des Volkes
Triumph
Alto and Piano

Vier Gesänge (Jewgeni Jewtuschenko)

Drei Lieder (Heinrich Heine)

1978

Zwei Gedichte (Karl Mickel)

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BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Baritone, Michael Hix has been praised by critics for his "expressive voice" and "commanding stage presence." Originally from Ozark, Alabama, Hix holds a Bachelor of Music degree in music theory from Furman University, and dual masters degrees in voice and historical musicology from Florida State University.

In June 2006 Hix was featured as a soloist on the "Bernstein on Broadway" concert with the Boston Pops. Conducted by Keith Lockhart, the concert included selections from *West Side Story*, *Candide*, *Wonderful Town* and *On the Town*.

In July and August of 2006, Hix was a vocal fellow at the Tanglewood Music Center, the Boston Symphony's Institute for Advanced Musical Study. While at Tanglewood he was featured in concerts at Seiji Ozawa Hall, where he performed works by Mozart, Dessau, and Copland, and Babbitt. In addition to his performances while at Tanglewood, Hix had the opportunity to coach with Dawn Upshaw, Lucy Shelton, and Ken Griffiths, and sing in masterclasses with James Levine, Kurt Ollman, and Phylliss Curtin.

Recent operatic roles include Falke in *Die Fledermaus*, Lord Mountararat in *Iolanthe*, Germont in *La Traviata*, Don Alfonso in *Così fan tutte*, Nick Shadow in *The Rake's Progress*, Melchior in *Amahl and the Night Visitors*, Noye in *Noye's Fludde*, Monterone in *Rigoletto*, and Bertouf in the world premiere of *A Friend of Napoleon* by Pulitzer Prize winning composer Robert Ward. Hix has sung with Ohio Light Opera, Opera Birmingham, Ashlawn-Highland Opera, Opera del Sol, Florida State Opera, and Furman University Opera.

Past concert and oratorio solo engagements have included Mendelssohn's *Elijah*, J.S. Bach's *Johannes-Passion* and *Lutherische Messen*, Handel's *Messiah*, John Eccles' *Hymn to Harmony*, Mozart's *Requiem*, Orff's *Carmina Burana*, Vaughan William's *Hodie*, and Mahler's *Kindertotenlieder*. Hix has been featured in concerts with the Boston Pops, Orlando Philharmonic Orchestra, Tallahassee Symphony, Tupelo Symphony, Southeastern Symphony Orchestra, Tallahassee Bach Parley, and Florida State New Music Ensemble.

As a musicologist, Hix is the winner of numerous awards including the Simonton

Literary Prize and a student presentation award from the American Musicological Society. His research interests include: Baroque vocal music, silent film music, the theater organ, politics and music, and 20th century song repertoire.